

THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,888

FRIDAY 29 AUGUST 1997

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THE TABLOID

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EPIDEMIC**

Mowlam targets plastic bullets

New curbs on use in Ulster

Fran Abrams and Anthony Bevins

Exclusive

Deep unease among senior ministers about excessive firing of plastic bullets in Northern Ireland is expected to lead to curbs on their use. Senior members of the government believe guidelines for use of baton rounds in Northern Ireland are too loose and want them brought into line with far stricter rules in force in England and Wales, where they have never been used.

A review has already been set up by the Association of Chief Police Officers (Acpo) and is expected to report by the end of the year. Ministers know that such a move would help the peace process because nationalists in the province believe that the weapons have been used disproportionately against them.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, has told *The Independent*: "The Government is determined, as are the police officers concerned, that guidelines for dealing with public disorder and for the use of police equipment such as firearms (into which category plastic baton round guns fall) must be coherent, up-to-date and appropriate for the prevailing circumstances."

Since 1972, 17 people have been killed and more than 100 gravely injured by plastic bullets in Northern Ireland. The most recent death was in 1989, but in April two teenagers were hit in the head with baton rounds as they came out of a youth club. Both were seriously injured.

The use of plastic bullets has escalated over the last two years, with almost 11,000 fired since January 1996. Even in 1995, when the last IRA ceasefire was in place, the Royal Ulster Constabulary fired 273 plastic bullets during disturbances.

The Independent has discovered marked disparities between the rules for the use of plastic bullets by the RUC, the army, and police forces in Britain. All three sets of guidelines used to be confidential, but have been declassified after a series of parliamentary questions from Brian Sedgwick, Labour MP for Hackney South and Shoreditch.

While mainland police can only fire plastic bullets to prevent "serious risk of loss of life"

when other methods of policing have been tried and failed, the security forces in Northern Ireland can use them to protect property or in the "detection of crime".

In England and Wales, a chief police officer or at the very least a superintendent must authorise the use of the bullets. In Northern Ireland, individual gunners may decide to take action "if they judge their actions are warranted". Even these lax guidelines are regularly flouted by the RUC and army, according to civil liberties groups. For example the Committee on the Administration of Justice, which monitors marches where plastic bullets are likely to be fired, says its observers have never once heard officers give the required warning before firing.

The Acpo review of guidelines was launched after a report last year from the Chief Inspector of Constabulary expressed concern over the RUC guidelines and said they should be changed to reflect precisely those used in England.

Ronnie Flanagan, the RUC Chief Constable, objected to that, but later accepted the Government's decision to announce a joint review by the RUC and Acpo. It has now emerged that the review is being led not by the RUC but by Acpo. Ms Mowlam has said she expects the army to take any changes into account.

The Independent reported exclusively in June that faulty plastic bullets were used in Northern Ireland for a year after it had been discovered that they were firing too fast. It also emerged that the faulty batch consisted of 284,500 bullets - more than twice the total fired over the previous 24 years.

Further pressure has been placed on the Government by a European Parliament paper published in April. It says the firing of plastic bullets in Northern Ireland last summer constituted excessive force and breached the UN code of conduct for law enforcers.

The report calls on parliament to renew its call for a ban on the use of plastic bullets in the EU, first made in May 1982.



An RUC officer using a plastic bullet gun earlier this year. Ministers want the use of baton rounds in Northern Ireland to be in line with that in the rest of the UK. Photograph: Pacemaker

Sinn Fein gets place at peace talks table

David McKittrick
Ireland correspondent

A vital piece of the Northern Ireland peace process jigsaw is to be slotted into place today when the Government confirms that six weeks of IRA ceasefire have qualified Sinn Fein for a place at the talks table.

The development, though widely expected, is none the less historic in that it represents the first time a British government has invited the republican movement to take part in round-table talks.

Following today's move the Government's next important objective will be to coax Union-

ists to join the republicans, the British and Irish governments and the various other parties at the talks which are due to open on 15 September.

For this reason Mr Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, can be expected to do what she can, when she announces the decision this morning, to encourage Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble to participate fully in the talks process.

Mr Trimble continued to reserve his position on this point after meeting Tony Blair at Downing Street yesterday. The Unionist leader would only say: "We will see what the position is, as and when that comes."

He was, however, markedly

more sceptical and suspicious about the bona fides of the republicans than the Government, remarking: "At present Sinn Fein have not established a commitment to exclusively peaceful means. If you are committed to exclusively peaceful means, you are going to abide by the views of the people and not try and change it by violence."

Downing Street said the meeting between Mr Blair and Mr Trimble had been constructive and positive, a spokesman adding: "We are still working towards finding the mechanisms for inclusive talks. [The Unionists] argued strongly that confidence building was a two-way process and we will

be taking into account their concerns."

Mr Trimble said that the arrangements for a new arms decommissioning body, agreed earlier this week by Dublin and London, had been inadequate. He added that this issue had to be resolved within the talks process before there could be any question of moving to substantive issues.

Mr Trimble is due to meet leaders of the Roman Catholic Church within the next few days as part of a consultative process undertaken by his party before any decision is taken on whether to enter the talks.

Reports from Dublin of a significant IRA arms find earlier

this month did nothing to alleviate Unionist suspicions concerning republican bona fides. A search by Gardai two weeks ago uncovered a large amount of material including time-power units for up to 400 bombs together with a radio-controlled device which, it was said, might be used to steer driverless

vehicles into security force installations.

The arms were found in the attic of a farmhouse in Co Cavan. A Garda spokesman said they appeared to have been in the attic since before the latest IRA ceasefire declared on 20 July. A man was questioned and released.

Secret agents go to war on drug barons

Steve Crawshaw
Kuala Lumpur
Matthew Chance
Bangkok

Robin Cook said yesterday that he wanted Britain's intelligence services to play a larger role in combating the scourge of drug smuggling in South-East Asia. "My government has decided to use all the resources available to it to fight this scourge," he said in a speech in Malaysia. "This is not simply a restatement of old policy - we will

refocus all resources to make this a top priority."

"Our diplomatic, aid, law enforcement and intelligence assets will all be targeted at fighting the international drugs trade," he said as part of a speech which covered relations between Britain and South-East Asia. It is rare that ministers make public mention of the intelligence agencies or their role.

The intelligence organisations will concentrate on trying to stifle the production of drugs

at their source rather than just catching traffickers as they enter Britain. To reinforce this commitment greater resources are to be allocated to M16 and the listening base in GCHQ Cheltenham. So far this year \$42m has been spent on anti drug measures abroad.

The Secret Intelligence Service, or M16, is always quick to spot new roles in the post-Cold War world. M16 has set up a "Global Issues Controllerate" to target drug traffickers which includes officers working on

organised crime. Similar arrangements are at GCHQ, which monitors radio messages.

But forget flashy cars with ejector seats, or fountain pens packed with explosives. The real-life 007s in Robin Cook's "refocused" SIS may find a bottle of mosquito repellent more useful in their new mission: to combat Asia's ruthless drug traffickers.

Hidden behind thick malaria and swamp-ridden jungles, the notorious "golden triangle" opium fields of Burma, Laos

and Thailand produce the bulk of the world's heroin. Protected by corrupt officials and their own well-trained guerrilla armies, the secretive drug overlords, like Burma's infamous Khun Sa, who profit from the illicit trade have seen their organisations thriving in recent years.

The new emphasis on combating international drug crime, particularly from heroin-producing Burma, is likely to involve British agents on covert operations deep in

Asia's jungle, monitoring trafficking routes from Asia to Europe and America, and perhaps even infiltrating the tight-knit Asian gangs who control heroin production and supply drug distribution networks across the globe. "Intelligence gathering is the key to breaking down these criminal organisations," said Richard Dickens, an intelligence advisor to the UN's International Drug Control Programme in Bangkok.

Boost for M16, page 8

Gays take a safari to study animal magic

Kim Sengupta

Homosexuals and lesbians are to be taken on a special tour of a Dutch safari park to observe "gay behaviour" among animals.

The Beekse Bergen safari park at Hilversum is holding the weekend-long event to highlight the fact that hundreds of species take part in homosexual acts, say officials.

Up to 3,000 gay visitors are expected at the park, 60 miles south of Amsterdam, next

weekend. Events will include bus and boat trips during which guides will point out gay activities among animals ranging from apes to elephants. There will also be literature available on the subject.

Beekse Bergen regularly holds theme weekends. These have included mothers' and fathers' day events to show "parenting skills" in the animal world.

The gay visit has been organised by the newspaper *Gay*

Krant and a pressure group, Rainbow Fundy. The outing is part of a series for homosexuals and lesbians which have previously included amusement parks and Disneyland Paris. Amsterdam has a thriving gay scene and will host the quadrennial Gay Games next year.

Up to 300 species display gay behaviour but it is not directly comparable with human sexuality, say officials at Beekse Bergen. On occasions ritualised homosexual acts are carried

out by the dominant animal in a group to assert his authority.

Leo Beckers, a director of Beekse Bergen, stressed that heterosexual visitors would be as welcome as gays. The management would also be happy to advise any British safari park which wants to lay on similar facilities.

"We cannot guarantee that the visitors will actually see gay acts taking place, that will depend entirely on luck. But we shall have guides on board who would be

able to point out certain things, and answer questions."

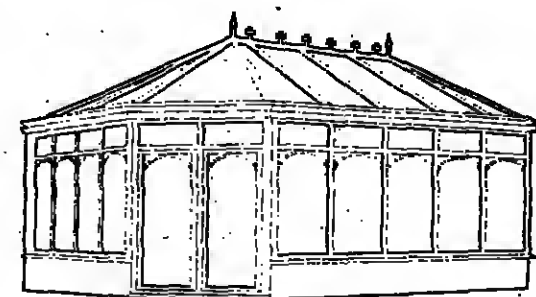
"One cannot say that homosexuality among animals is exactly like humans, but it does exist. We have examples of this among apes and cows, flamingos and elephants. Obviously the animals do not consider this to be unnatural in any way."

"We have got a lot of land here, and the gay people can camp overnight and make a weekend of it. We hope it will all go well."



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Football record
The Brazilian Denilson, 20, is reported to have signed for the Spanish side Real Betis for a record transfer worth £22m, plus a buy-out clause of £260m. Page 24

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Shadow minister's 'conflict of interests' to be reported

A complaint about a shadow minister's possible conflict of interest, between a £25,000-a-year management consultancy and his front-bench Commons responsibilities, has been made to Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards.

Dennis MacShane, Labour MP for Rotherham, wrote to Sir Gordon yesterday, pointing out that the outside job taken up by David Willetts with an employment consultancy, Monitor, could conflict with his post as a Conservative spokesman on employment.

"His new employer advises a large number of firms on employment policy issues and has a direct interest in parliamentary matters relating to employment policy," Mr MacShane told Sir Gordon.

If Mr Willetts was allowed to keep both jobs, he added, it would make a "mockery" of a new Commons clampdown on outside consultancies.

But Mr Willetts said yesterday: "Labour front-bench spokesmen had outside interests in opposition and every elected member of the (Labour) Shadow Cabinet was sponsored by a trade union. Moreover, I have discussed and cleared this arrangement with Sir Gordon Downey."

Anthony Bevins

19 soldiers discharged for drugs

Nineteen soldiers from the same battalion have been discharged from the Army after failing drugs tests, it was confirmed yesterday. The soldiers - all privates and lance corporals aged 17 to 24 - are from the Royal Anglian Regiment, 2nd Battalion.

They were subjected to random testing for a cocktail of drugs, including LSD, ecstasy, cannabis and amphetamines and proved positive in a June operation mounted by military police. All have been discharged following the test results but two are appealing. The Army confirmed yesterday.

The findings were not made public at the time but have leaked out while the battalion is on leave before heading for a Cyprus posting.

The drugs shame of the regiment, whose Colonel in Chief is the Queen Mother, came on the day that the Government announced the SAS would be taking a key role in the international war on drugs. They are to be involved in a joint operation with MI5 and the Secret Intelligence Service.

Teenager was probably strangled



Schoolgirl Kirsty Tidman, whose dismembered torso and legs were found floating in the River Thames, was sexually assaulted and probably strangled, an inquest heard yesterday.

The 14-year-old disappeared from her home in south-east London, in May. Her body was found nine days later near Wapping, east London, and her legs were found separately shortly afterwards. Her head has still not been recovered.

Poplar coroner's court, in east London, heard that she was dead at the time her body was dismembered and had probably been sexually assaulted. Consultant pathologist Michael Heath said: "There was extensive bruising on the back of the neck and lower left side of the neck and this indicated that the death was caused by compression of the neck."

Coroner Dr Stephen Chan recorded a verdict of unlawful killing.

Heatwave means death for fish

Environmental experts may have to re-stock a stretch of river after the recent hot weather killed 20,000 fish, it was disclosed yesterday. The fish suffocated after oxygen levels plummeted in the waters along a 2km stretch of the Old Bedford River at Sutton Gault, Cambridgeshire.

Experts from the Environment Agency were called to the river on Sunday, where they found thousands of dead roach and perch, and several hundred dead pike, bream and tench.

A spokeswoman said: "The dead fish were mostly small roach, but other fish were also affected and after an assessment we may find we need to re-stock. The fish died because the hot weather left water temperatures high and caused more needs to grow, which depleted the dissolved oxygen levels and suffocated the fish."

Channel 5 toasts Toon Army

Football star Temur Ketsbaia was the toast of Channel 5 yesterday after his last-gasp winner for Newcastle United gave the new station one of its highest-ever audiences. The see-saw Champions League qualifying match was seen by a peak audience of 3.4 million on Wednesday night - more than four times the number who tune in to the channel's soap, *Family Affairs*.

According to unofficial figures, Channel 5 grabbed a top audience share of 15 per cent. It also boosted its average for the day to 5.8 per cent. "To use the old footballing cliché we are over the moon. This exceeded what we expected the match to get. It was a high drama game and that is reflected in the figures," said a spokesman.

England's World Cup qualifier against Poland earlier this year was watched by about 5 million people.

Channel 5 has bought the rights to broadcast Chelsea's Cup Winners' Cup matches this season.

Boys, 10, charged with rape

Two boys aged 10 were accused today of the rape of a nine-year-old girl in a West London school, police said. They were also charged along with two other 10-year-old boys of indecently assaulting the girl at the school in May. The four, all from the west London area, will appear at West London Youth Court on 24 September.

TV sports presenter has cancer op

Television sports presenter Helen Rollason, who is fighting cancer, has had an operation, the BBC said yesterday. "Helen had an operation last night (Wednesday), the surgery went according to plan, and she is recovering well," a spokeswoman said.

The 41-year-old former PE teacher, who was the first woman to present the BBC's flagship sports programme *Grandstand*, is in hospital in Brentwood, Essex, the spokeswoman added.

The hospital - which has not been named - has clarified that she is suffering from cancer of the colon, not stomach cancer as reported earlier, the spokeswoman said.

Ms Rollason was diagnosed with the illness on Monday.

BA talks at critical stage

Negotiations to settle the cabin crew dispute at British Airways are understood to have reached a critical stage. Members of the Transport and General Workers' Union at BA are due to meet early next week to decide whether to ballot on further industrial action.

Stewards and stewardesses staged a three-day strike in July in protest over the imposition of a pay and conditions deal. Union leaders have presented the company with a plan to save £42m from cabin crew costs - the issue at the centre of the dispute.

people



Don and Yvonne Newman with their son, Daniel, as they arrived back on dry land yesterday.

How we ended up all at sea, by rescued family

As the rescued Newman family returned to port yesterday on a rather bigger ship than they had anticipated - the 20,000-ton aircraft carrier HMS *Illustrious* - experts debated the merit of long voyages by sailors with little or no experience.

The dream of Don and Yvonne Newman to sail around the world - with their six-year-old son, Daniel - in their 36ft *Touchdown* was brutally destroyed by appalling weather in the Bay of Biscay.

Sea King helicopters from *Illustrious* had to winch the family to safety after they had endured three storm-tossed days on mountainous waves.

The family, who had sold their house and given up their jobs to sail round the world, set off from Lowestoft in July and had been heading for Gibraltar.

While *Illustrious* steamed into Portsmouth harbour, Mrs Newman, who was severely sea-sick and confined to her bed for three days, described their ordeal and paid tribute to their helicopter crew rescuers.

"The weather was so bad it took four attempts for them to even get on to the yacht. But the determination on the man's face was amazing. He gritted his teeth and just carried on."

Mrs Newman added: "All I wanted to do was get Daniel off the yacht. He hadn't eaten for three days and I was just so worried."

Meanwhile, sailing instructor Les Rant, a former neighbour of the Newmans, said he was surprised they had decided to set sail on a long trip because of their lack of experience and lack of training.

He said: "I thought they were being ambitious. I think they only brought the boat around from the south coast of England at the end of last year."

A spokeswoman for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution said anyone setting sail with little or no experience was "unwise".

Spokeswoman Sue Denny said: "We try to educate people who use the sea, by giving advice, and we always suggest people go on training courses before sailing."

However, Robin Sjoberg, cruising manager at the Royal Yachting Association said the family had responded correctly to atrocious conditions they had no control over, adding that there was little they could have done to prevent the disaster.

"They were in a force nine in the Bay of Biscay," he said. "A situation with 50ft waves crashing around your 36ft boat is not a nice experience."

And Mr Newman defended the family's decision to sail. "We had taken a five-day forecast and this weather wasn't predicted," he added. "We are absolutely shattered. This was our home and we have lost everything."

Michael Streeter

Scandal forces Joe Kennedy to pull out of election

In an announcement that could mark the beginning of the end of the Kennedy clan's legendary influence in American politics, the late President Kennedy's nephew, Joe Kennedy, said that he would be not standing for the governorship of Massachusetts in state elections this autumn.

Kennedy, who is 44, made the announcement yesterday afternoon, after telephoning fellow congressmen and political allies to inform them of his decision.

From being almost a foregone conclusion at the beginning of this year, Joseph Kennedy II's election to the governorship had turned into an uphill struggle in a matter of months, after a series of scandals that refused to die down.

Earlier this month, John Kennedy Jr, son of the late president, published an article in *George*, the New York magazine he founded, to criticise the conduct of his cousins.

Dubbing them "poster boys for bad behaviour", he said: "great privilege demands great responsibility."

At the same time, Joe Kennedy's younger, married brother, Michael, was investigated for allegedly having a three-year affair with the family's underage baby-sitter.

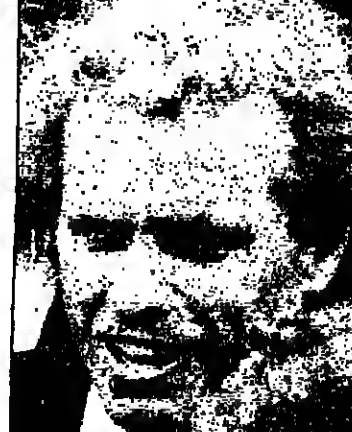
The case was kept out of the courts when the family of the girl concerned, now a college student and of age, decided not to proceed, and the police dropped the case.

Michael Kennedy, however, never denied the allegations, which left the impression of a law-breaker getting away with it because he was a Kennedy.

Joe and Michael are sons of the late Senator Robert Kennedy, who was assassinated in 1968, less than five years after his brother.

Earlier this month, John Kennedy Jr, son of the late president, published an article in *George*, the New York magazine he founded, to criticise the conduct of his cousins.

Dubbing them "poster boys for bad behaviour", he said: "great privilege demands great responsibility."



ilities." His words were seen as an unprecedented breach in the Kennedy family's traditionally cast-iron solidarity.

Joe Kennedy's decision not to seek the governorship of Massachusetts, a state in which Kennedys have stood for elected posts 18 times in the past half-century without once losing, suggests an acceptance that his chances of winning were slim.

Polls had shown a dramatic slide in his popularity to only 34 per cent, following the recent scandals.

Mary Dejevsky, Washington

Catherine Cookson's £100,000 gift to university

The best-selling author Dame Catherine Cookson has donated £100,000 to a university campus, it was announced yesterday. Sunderland University is to honour the 91-year-old Tyne-side millionaire by naming part of its library extension "the Catherine Cookson Reading Room".

The chairman of the university's development trust, local businessman Sir Tom Cowie, said the gift would go towards developing the university's riverside campus.

In 1991, the then polytechnic awarded an honorary doctorate to Dame Catherine, who was born into a poor household in Jarrow, but is now one of the North East's wealthiest residents.

The gift is Dame Catherine's second six-figure donation to the university. In 1992, when it was still a polytechnic, she gave £100,000 towards scientific research.

Dame Catherine's first novel was published in 1950 and her worldwide book sales in 17 different

languages have topped 100 million. Her novels include *The Moth*, *The Mallen Streak* and *Feathers in the Fire*. She received the OBE in 1985, and became a dame in 1992.

Her publisher recently announced that as Dame Catherine is so prolific, new works are guaranteed for the next 10 years.

The university's vice-chancellor, Dr Anne Wright, said that naming the reading room after Dame Catherine reflected the impact of the author's first visit to a public library, more than 20 years before she became a published writer.

Dr Wright added that the money was "another example of the unstinting commitment of Dame Catherine and her husband Tom to advancing educational opportunities in the North East".

The author has also made huge donations to Newcastle University, the latest being £250,000 earlier this year to keep open its previously closure-threatened Hatton Art Gallery.

Philip McNamara

briefing

JOBS

Young workers affected by age discrimination

Young people face age discrimination at work as much as older employees, a new report found today. Men as young as 18 suffer from ageism, often told they are too young for a job, according to a survey of 2,000 firms. Women begin to encounter age-related problems when they are 21, sometimes suffering barriers to promotion.

The poll, by the Employers' Forum on Age and recruitment firm Austin Knight, showed that workers in some professions are getting older. Judges and court officers are getting "dramatically" older, with a third aged between 55 and 69, compared with just one in 10 six years ago.

The number of software engineers over the age of 40 has increased from 25 per cent to 36 per cent in the same period. The myth that policemen are getting younger is also exploded by the research, which concluded that police forces are keeping track with demographic changes in society. Last year one in four policemen in lower ranks were aged under the age of 29, compared to one in three in 1991.

The research showed a huge decline in the number of piano tuners, down from 7,089 to 3,281 between 1991 and 1996, but a 4,000 increase in the number of undertakers, up to 9,925 over the same period.

PROPERTY

More protection for house-buyers

House-buyers and sellers will soon have new rights and greater protection because an estate agent complaints scheme is being extended across the industry. From January next year every high street will include at least one estate agent which belongs to the ombudsman scheme.

The expansion of the scheme was welcomed by the Office of Fair Trading, which recently issued a stern warning to the industry following reports that some estate agents were engaging in sharp practices. From January 1 1998 the public are being advised to only use an agent which is displaying the scheme logo.

The new Ombudsman for Estate Agents scheme is aimed at making it easier for buyers and sellers who are unhappy about the service they have received to complain and get compensation if their grievance is judged to be valid.

The move is the result of a link-up between the large estate agency chains and the National Association of Estate Agents (NAEA), the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), and the Incorporated Society of Valuers and Auctioneers (ISVA).



HEALTH

Deprivation equals tooth decay

Deprived children suffer most from tooth decay and also receive the greatest benefit from fluoride in water supplies, researchers said yesterday.

A team led by Dr Colwyn Jones, from Wigan and Bolton Health Authority, found increasing levels of tooth decay in five-year-olds living in deprived areas. They also discovered that fluoridation reduced levels of tooth decay by the greatest amount in poor areas - the more deprived the area, the more children benefited from fluoride in water. The findings, published in the *British Medical Journal* today, prompted an urgent call from the authors for more fluoridation.

The dental records of a random sample of children were studied in three regions - Hartlepool, where the water is naturally fluoridated, Newcastle and North Tyneside, where water is artificially fluoridated, and Salford and Trafford, where there is no fluoridation. Analysis showed an overall 44 per cent reduction in tooth decay in fluoridated areas, which increased to 54 per cent in areas of greatest socio-economic deprivation.

PRISONS

Sex and drugs ignored by staff

Female inmates take drugs and have sex in front of prison officers while in jail, according to offenders cited in a report published yesterday.

Prisoners at Styal jail, which houses women criminals and female young offenders near Manchester, told inspectors that overt lesbian activity and drug use by some prisoners in the grounds and in the houses were ignored by staff.

The report by the Chief Inspector of Prisons also disclosed that inmates were given keys to their cells, but were being kept on locked wings.

Prison officers at Styal criticised the practise of open cells, but the Prison Service said several jails successfully used the system.

Overall the report praised the jail and said significant improvements had been made since the last inspection in 1990.

Jason Bennetto

GARDENING

Greenhouse heaters often unsafe

Most of the greenhouse heaters on sale have safety flaws which could prove lethal to gardeners this winter, a report out today claims. Inadequate regulation, and design flaws, are blamed for hazards including potential build-up of carbon monoxide, electric shocks and fire risks.

Gardening Which? magazine tested a range of electric, propane and paraffin heaters and identified possible problems in 16 out of 23. Testers claimed three propane heaters failed to meet current EU standards.

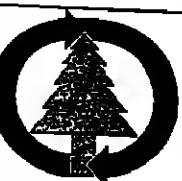
Although all carried seals of approval from accredited laboratories, the report said, some laboratories interpreted current regulations differently, leading to varying standards.

Too many electric heaters were not splash-proof, giving rise to a risk of electric shocks, the report said, adding that safety standards covering this hazard were not due to come into effect until 2004.

The report found that too many paraffin heaters were prone to leaks, messy, and difficult to turn on and off without burning your fingers.

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Fifty years of the retail price index has produced a fascinating snapshot of changes in our way of life

How the pound in your pocket took a pounding

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

The pound in your pocket will now buy you only one-twentieth as much as in 1947, thanks to inflation. The 2,000 per cent increase in prices since the Second World War is in sharp contrast to the near absence of any increase in the general price level during the previous 150 years.

It goes to show that when your elderly parents boast about getting change from a shilling after a night in the pub and a fish and chip supper, they are not exaggerating.

A pint of beer, costing an average of £1.65 now, was only 7p (or 1s/4d) in 1947, and a pound of potatoes that cost 23 pence in June 1977 would have been 0.5p (or 1d) half a century earlier.

The official measurement of prices by the Retail Price Index (RPI) celebrates its 50th birthday this year, its history coinciding with the era of inflation. But some prices have increased far more than the average, according to the Office for National Statistics.

The cost of housing, for example, is thirty-five times what it was five decades ago, mainly because of successive house price booms. Just after

the war a six-bedroom house in suburban Wimbledon went for £7,250. It would go now for £775,000 – and climbing fast.

On the other hand, clothes prices have gone up by a mere sevenfold on average in 50 years. Buying a women's suit would cost an average of £203.99 this year, compared with the equivalent of £23.15 plus 12 ration coupons in 1947.

But the forthcoming royal marriage that year of Princess Elizabeth needed Parliament to approve an extra clothing coupon allowance for her wedding dress.

The RPI is one of the most important barometers of the health of the economy and also a telling indicator of social change. The "shopping basket" of items whose prices make up the index has changed dramatically over the years.

For example, in 1947 – when Clement Attlee was Prime Minister, India had just been granted independence and England won the Test match cricket series against South Africa – amongst the food items included were unskinned rabbits, lard and condensed milk. That compares with 1997's burgers, *fromage fraits* and restaurant meals.

Ice cream and brown bread

Prices ain't what they used to be...

	1947	1997
Frock	£15	£89
Womens suit	£23	£200
Womens cardigan	8d	£25
Cold cream	11p	£2.65
Bar of chocolate	7p	79p
Pint of beer	7p	£1.65
Road tax	£1	£145
Family saloon car	£416	£12,000
'Over to you' by Roal Dahl	38p	£5.99
Six bedroom house	£7,250	£775,000
Two weeks in Lucerne	£57	£815
Headache tablets	7p	£1.85
Man's wristwatch	£6.40	£29.50
Copy of The Observer	1p	£1
Copy of the Daily Hansard	3p	£5
12" classical music recording	24p	£15.99

were added in the 1950s, fish fingers in the 1960s, wine and yogurt in the 1970s and frozen ready meals in the 1980s.

Drinking habits have changed over the decades too, as the staple pint of bitter of the Fifties has been joined by sherry, wine, low-alcohol lager and, this year, by alcopops.

The appliances whose prices were measured half a century ago were items such as radio sets, fridges and mangles. These have given way to portable CD players, com-

puters and microwave ovens. Trolleybus fares have been replaced by foreign package holidays and Channel Tunnel fares, corsets and "seamless rayon hose" by T-shirts and leggings.

In 1947 the RPI did not need to cover healthcare. In 1997 it measures the cost of NHS prescription charges, private medical insurance, eye tests and condoms.

The government started collecting information about prices in a systematic way in 1914,

when it started to measure the "cost of living index for the working classes", on the grounds that the poor would be the biggest losers from the inflation expected to be caused by the impending war.

This index included only 80 "essentials" such as food, clothes, housing, heating and tobacco – but not alcohol.

The modern RPI was begun in 1947 and differed from the pre-war version by covering what people actually spent their money on, rather than

what a Whitehall official deemed essential. The "shopping basket" of items that is included is now updated every year using information from a national survey of family spending patterns.

The statisticians also adjust the RPI for changes in the quality of goods and services – something they started in 1947 to compensate for the fact that the Government massively watered down the alcohol content of beer rather than rationing it. Quality adjustments

now are more likely to take account of faster computer speeds, for instance.

The twentyfold rise in the price level during the past 50 years corresponds to an average inflation rate of 6.3 per cent. Inflation was negative during the early 1960s but hit a peak of 26.9 per cent in August 1975. With an inflation rate of 2.5 per cent – the Bank of England's current aim – it would take more than a century for prices to climb twentyfold. However, although these

price increases sound alarming, average earnings have also risen faster. This means that the real standard of living is higher. It would have taken somebody twice as long in 1947 to earn enough to buy the typical basket of goods as it takes now.

Fifty years ago, it would have taken 10 weeks to pay for a two-week foreign holiday, but just three weeks' effort now. The two and a half weeks' work needed to buy a dress in 1947 has shrunk to a mere 11 hours.

Change or face closure, Scottish Ballet is told

Kathy Marks

The Scottish Ballet was ordered by the Scottish Arts Council last night to re-invent itself as a smaller company with a less grandiose vision, or face effective closure.

The ultimatum was delivered by the Arts Council after a meeting in Edinburgh to consider Scottish Ballet's future. The company was told that the remainder of its annual £2.12 million grant would be withheld unless its chair, Oona Ivory, and the entire board resigned.

The decision stems from a funding crisis affecting Scotland's four national arts companies: Scottish Ballet, Scottish Opera, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

The Arts Council lost patience with the ballet company after it withdrew from a plan to share orchestra resources with the opera, which would have generated savings and led to the provision of an extra £2.4m for the arts by the Scottish Office.



Two dancers delivering Scottish Ballet's petition to No 10

As another condition for releasing the remaining £571,000 of Scottish Ballet's grant, the Arts Council is demanding that the company re-focus its artistic vision and move away from the large-scale classical productions that have been its mainstay.

It also wants it to agree to a radical restructuring that would help it to operate within its present budget. Magnus Linklater, chairman of the Arts Council, said last night that if Scottish Ballet did not meet the conditions, "it will go to the wall". Lucy Shorrocks, the company's

marketing director, said that the company would decide on its response at a board meeting to be held within the next week. "We can't say anything more until then," she said.

The Arts Council's demands follow a campaign by Scottish Ballet to safeguard its future. Earlier this week, two dancers delivered a 50,000-name petition to Downing Street, calling on the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, to intervene to save the 30-year-old Glasgow-based company.

Princess Margaret, its patron for the past eight years, has written to Sam Galbraith, the Scottish arts minister, expressing her "grave concern" at the situation.

Mr Linklater says Scottish Ballet will keep the same level of grant, but should produce a wider range of medium and small-scale works, without compromising its artistic standards. Its current repertoire – mainly Swan Lake – did not allow for flexibility or variety, he said. "More to the point, we cannot afford it."

Dial-a-shrink offers therapy in the comfort of your own home

Claire Garner

Touch tone therapy has arrived in Britain. No waiting lists, no early morning appointments; just pick up the telephone, key in your PIN number and settle down for a session.

The techno-treatment for Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) means that the stress of sharing one's innermost fears with a real human being is replaced by a less demanding relationship – with a computer.

According to Dr Oscar Meehan, the psychiatrist at the Maudsley Hospital, in south London, who is responsible for co-ordinating the new dial-a-shrink service, the series of conversations with a computerised voice has the same success rate as a costly course of face-to-face counselling.

Of the 73 patients in the UK who have undergone the telephone treatment, 80 per cent report themselves to be improved or much improved. One 47-year-old woman with a 39-year history of OCD has apparently watched her condition drop from severe to mild after just three weeks of calls.

The computer program is entitled BT Steps (with the BT standing for Behavioural Therapy), was devised by British and American psychologists. Their highly pragmatic alternative to conventional behaviour therapy takes three and a half months, during which time the patient can ring up the therapist as often as is required, at any time of the day or night.

The calls are free on the NHS and nothing is too much trouble for the soothing American at

the other end of the phone. "Hello," he says, in the same, cheerful, friendly voice. "Welcome to BT Steps. Please enter your identification number using the number keys on your phone."

From there, the patient can dictate the course of the session. There are nine "calls", or steps, in total, but they can be worked through at any pace. "You are currently on call three. Would you like to do this call now? If you would like to do this call now, press one. If not, press two."

As many as 1.75 million of the British population suffers from OCD, of which 10 per cent of cases are severe. Behaviour Therapy itself is nothing new for OCD, a syndrome marked by rituals and obsessions.

Sufferers first learn to spot whatever sets off their obsessions and rituals and then learn

to face those triggers without becoming obsessive. One advantage of the telephonic treatment is the reduction in waiting lists – British sufferers currently have to wait around 12 months for treatment.

Another is that it is tailor-made for anyone who can't meet a therapist in person. "You can do it from home and you don't have to make an appointment," enthuses Dr Meehan. "You can do it over the weekend, in the evenings; whenever you are free."

Common OCD rituals include endlessly washing one's hands, checking the front door is locked 20 times before leaving the house, and hoarding rubbish. Repeatedly telephoning one's therapist is not, apparently, a potential problem.

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Alexandra Williams

Summer school puts education at the centre of government programme

ing more important than education. What is important is that people see results ... and see us delivering on the things for which we were elected ... My vision for this country is that we should be the best educated nation in the Western world. If we are able to achieve that all the rest of it doesn't matter."

One of the 30 schools piloting the scheme was Sarah Bonnell School in Stratford, east London. Diane Wilson, assistant headteacher who ran the project for 31 children, enthused about it but warned that the root of the problem should be tackled, saying: "Summer schools can't be there to mop up what should have been done in the primary schools. I accept that with the deprivation in Newham, a lot of the parents are not sufficiently literate to be able to help their children and for many English is their second language."

"But primary class sizes need to be reduced. Many of the children would not have had to have attended if they had had the opportunities which they should have been entitled to early on."

Yesterday, Mr Blair's call for leading industrialists to pledge money was answered by businessman Maurice Hatter, chairman and owner of IMO Precision Controls Ltd, who donated £1m to expand the programme. This will be matched by £4m from the Government. Mr Blair said: "There is noth-

She said the scheme was a great success: "All but two of the children significantly improved."

The education spokesman for

The Tory education spokesman, Stephen Dorrell, said: "Today's announcement of more summer literacy schools initiative is for the few, not the many. In the expanded form of the summer literacy schools, they will help only 16,000 - only 3 per cent of the total. Labour must raise their sights."

Yesterday was the final day of the scheme at Thomas Tallis School, in south London. The project leader, Veronica Denyer, said: "We hope to see improvement in their self-esteem, general confidence and ability to cope with the transition from primary to secondary."

Education Extra—The Foundation for After-School Activities, chosen by the Government to co-ordinate the project, welcomed the extra funding. A spokesman, Joshua Hardy, said: "We have achieved so much already, so with literally millions more pounds next year we are optimistic about the results."

A survey published yesterday by education recruitment consultancy LHR Education revealed more than three-quarters of teachers believed it was a good idea but half said they felt poorly informed about it.



Demanding results: Tony Blair with pupils yesterday at Morpeth School, where he emphasised the priority he gave to education Photograph: Phillip Meech

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MORTGAGES

Jeremy Laurance
Health Editor

The world's leading specialists in anatomy, meeting in Sao Paulo, Brazil, yesterday announced that they had reached agreement on the revised nomenclature which includes between one and two thousand new names.

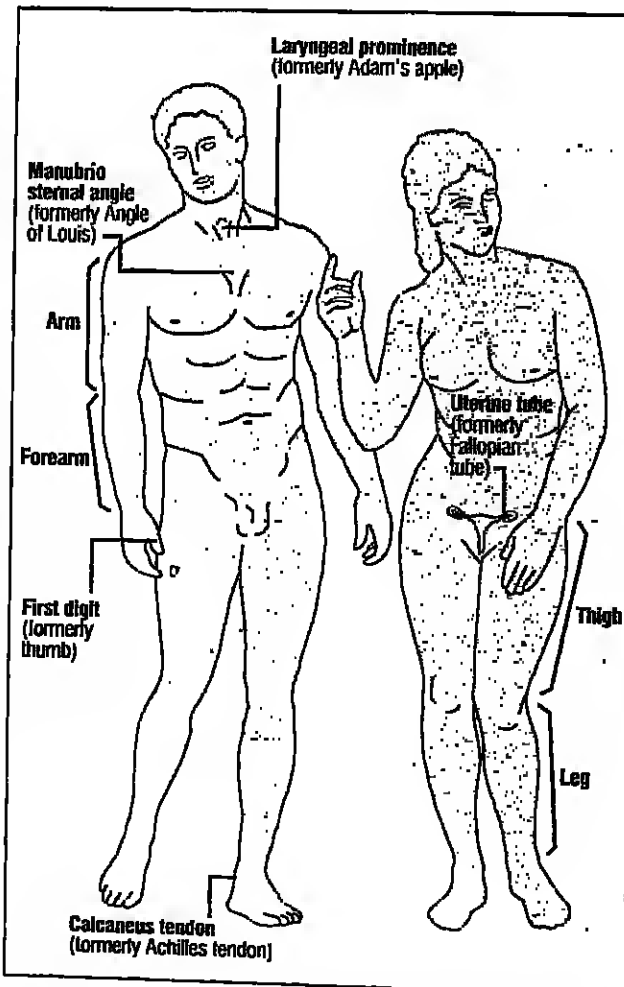
The results are likely to mean early obsolescence for familiar terms such as Adam's apple (henceforth to be known as "the laryngeal prominence") and Achilles' tendon ("calcaneus tendoo"). The fallopian tubes are to be known as "uterine tubes."

It will not, however, require re-writing of the song *Dem Bones* which was, anatomically, ahead of its time. The leg bone – both in the song and under the new nomenclature – connects the ankle to the kne^e (and not the hip, as many people think). The part between knee and hip the song correctly calls the thigh bone.

The new names run to 144 pages, plus an index of the same length, with each one given in Latin and English. The aim is to reduce confusion between doctors using different terminologies in different parts of the world. It took eight years for the terminology subcommittee of the International Federation of Associations of Anatomists to draw up the list.

According to the chairman of the committee, Professor Ian Whitmore, the growth of international travel and the expansion of information technology had driven the change. "We want to work for safety and congruence throughout the world. It is now very easy to send patient's notes via e-mail to the other side of the globe. It is better if the notes mean the same when they get there."

The two bones in the forearm known as the radius and the ulna provide an example of the sort of difficulties that can arise. In some countries, the



ulna is called the cubitus whereas in others, including the UK, the cubitus is the elbow.

Similarly, most English-speakers think of the hand as having a thumb and four digits with the "first finger" meaning the index finger. But the Latin terminology gives the hand five digits with the first being the thumb. "You can see the potential for confusion," said Professor Whitmore.

Latin has been chosen as the core language because it is stable politically uncontroversial, and has always been used to name body parts since Galen, the 4th-century Roman doctor, made the first attempt to classify them. Each part is also facing given its English equivalent but countries will be

POEM

ference of birds,
out
hearth's cold frame,
e of dark,
flame.

from the Cornish poet Charles
Collected Poems 1941-1997 is
his Selected Poems for Children
£5.99).

encouraged to translate the core Latin term into their own language if they wish.

Many Latin terms have become part of the language. "Testicle" comes from the Latin *testes* meaning witness (to the sexual act - cf testament). "Vagina" means scabbard (sheath of the sword).

In recent years, doctors have increasingly dispensed with eponyms such as Achilles' tendon and Adam's apple because there is no rationale for them. An Achilles' tendon could be anywhere in the body but the

There in the body but the new name, the calcaneus tendon, indicates that it is the tendon attached to the calcaneum, the bone of the heel. The "angle of Louis", the lump at the top of the breast bone named after the anatomist who discovered it, is to become the "manubrium sternale" — the "manubrium is the upper part of the breast bone (or sternum) between the collar bones."

"It is not that we don't like the names or the people, it is simply that most of the new terms are related to their function or position." Professor Whitmore said.

The approved list of names will be published early next year and anatomists hope it will be rapidly adopted. "We consulted widely so we are confident it will be accepted," Professor Whitmore said. The international federation comprises 60 associations representing more than nine out of 10 anatomists around the globe, he said.

DAILY POEM

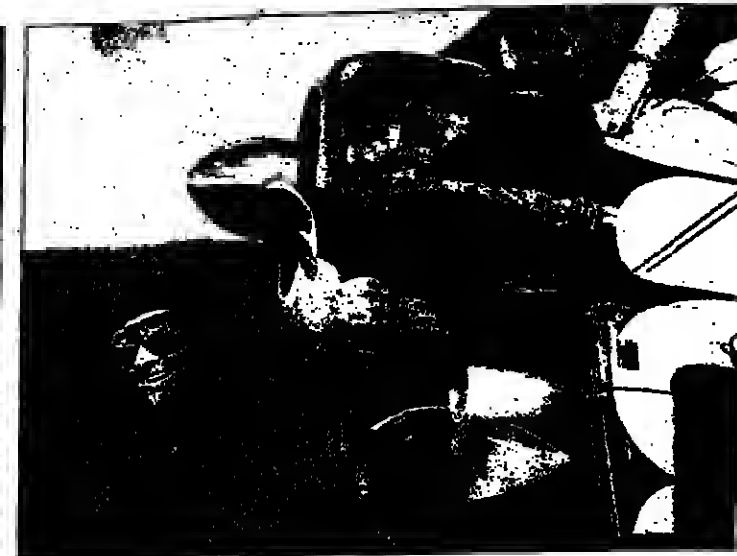
Kelly Wood

By Charles Causley

Walking in Kelly Wood, gathering words
Fragile as split leaves, fine sticks of sentences,
Spirals of bracken from the fallen ground,
I listen for the silences of stone,
The stream's white voice, the indifference of birds,
Safe in my quiet house I lay them out
Leaf, stick and bracken - in the hearth's cold frame,
Strike steel on flint against the page of dark,
Wait patiently for the first spark. A flame.

This poem completes our selection from the Cornish poet Charles Causley, who is 80 this week. His *Collected Poems 1941-1997* is published by Macmillan (£20) and his *Selected Poems for Children* by Macmillan Children's Books (£5.99).

هكذا من الامم



Veteran walks into records books on a wing and a prayer

Philip McNamara

An 84-year-old man may have flown into the record books yesterday as the oldest man to complete a wing-walk.

Leslie "Dizzy" Seales spent 20 minutes on top of a trainer aircraft at Shoreham in Sussex, flying to a height of 800ft.

But Mr Seales, who lives nearby, does not feel his feat is in any way unusual. He appears unflappable, even in the face of the wind. He said: "Yes, it was windy but very pleasant. I enjoyed it very much. Heights don't worry me at all."

Mr Seales is no stranger to danger. He was a gunner in a Boulton Paul Defiant Nightfighter

during Second World War, and performed his first wing walk to save an injured pilot in 1942.

After gunfire from German fighters struck his plane, Mr Seales clambered out of the gun turret, and inched his way along the fuselage to the cockpit. He managed to free his pilot and both parachuted to safety.

Mr Seales last performed a wing-walk in 1995, but he could not go for the record then because he had mislaid his birth certificate.

He has showed little fear in the face of enemy gunfire, and four wing walks. But he did not tell his wife of the planned stunt, fearing she might object and make him call it off.

High-flyer: Leslie Seales takes to the air for his wing walk at Shoreham yesterday and (top right) after returning safely to the ground

Photograph: Tom Pilston

Fitness fanatic is latest victim of CJD strain

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

The toll of cases of the fatal new variant of Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, v-CJD, thought to be caused by exposure to "mad cow disease", is rising inexorably.

Yesterday a 36-year-old fitness fanatic living in Ripley, Derbyshire, was revealed as the 26th known British case, leaving his parents distraught at the sight of their son slowly dying before their eyes.

Chris Warne, a computer systems analyst, was officially diagnosed as having v-CJD three weeks ago after first showing signs of illness at the end of last year. Formerly a keen footballer, cricketer and skier, he now needs round-the-clock care at Nottingham's Queen's Medical Centre, where doctors say he has less than a year to live.

"I saw him at the hospital. He was standing and then his legs went from under him," his father Terry, 65, said last night. "It was like that clip they show on TV of the cow with BSE."

Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) was first recognised in April 1985, though scientists have calculated that 30,000 BSE-infected animals may have been used for food in the five previous years. Between 1985 and 1989 - after the discovery - almost half a million BSE-infected cattle were used for food, according to Professor Roy Anderson of Oxford University.

The rapid rise in v-CJD cases echoes that of BSE, which rose from a few hundred cases a year, to thousands. More than 163,000 BSE cases have been confirmed since 1985, but CJD typically takes more than 10 years to show up. In 1994 there were three v-CJD deaths. In 1995 there were 10. So far this year 13 people have been confirmed with the incurable illness.

Mr Warne's symptoms began nine months ago when he became tired and withdrawn and received treatment for stress. Within six months he had been forced to give up his job

and was admitted to Derbyshire Royal Infirmary for tests, after which his parents were told their son had CJD. Yesterday they decided to make their son's condition public to raise awareness of the disease.

His mother Shirley, 60, said: "We knew about CJD but like everyone else we thought it would never happen to us. When Chris was in hospital I prepared myself for the worst but never dreamt he would have something like this. We were numb."

"We just can't help him and there's nothing anybody else can do. You do find yourself wringing your hands and feeling completely helpless. But by going public this is our way of helping and hope this will put pressure on the authorities to undertake more research."

Terry Warne said that "Chris was a healthy eater because he had his sports at the back of his mind. Now he doesn't even know where he is or why, and he has never even asked what is wrong with him."

Alert as tree-eating beetle gnaws its way into Britain

A tiny, tree-eating beetle appears to have started breeding in Britain, threatening millions of pounds worth of damage to the nation's commercial timber plantations, writes Nicholas Schoon.

For decades the Govern-

ment's Forestry Commission has been keeping careful watch for the spruce bark beetle. Every imported consignment of timber either has to be stripped of its bark or have been heated in a kiln before it is allowed in Britain, and inspectors check for

signs of the insect at ports.

Now, for the first time, there is evidence that the beetle has crossed from the Continent and established itself here. Twenty of them were found in an early warning trap located close to the Shotton Paper mill near Chester. The traps, dotted around the country, contain a chemical - pheromone - which the beetles find irresistible.

Forestry Commission officials believe these insects came from the mill's stockpile of logs, which come from forests across Britain to provide raw material to make newspaper.

The commission is now checking every forest which provided timber for the mill, to find out if the beetle is present. If they are found, then large numbers of trees will have to be cut down - "sanitation felling" - to prevent the insect's spread. At the end of the summer the 5mm-long creature can disperse by flying.

The beetle's favourite tree is the Norway spruce, which makes up about 8 per cent of commercial timber in Britain, and is a pest from Japan across Asia to Western Europe.

"It is a very real threat," said Roddie Burgess, the commission's head of plant health. "Left unchecked, it can kill significant numbers of trees fairly quickly."

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A map of the east coast of England, specifically showing the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk. The map highlights several coastal areas and reserves, including King's Lynn, Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft, and Ipswich. It also shows the locations of Benacre Broad, Covehithe Broad, Eastern Broad, Walsingham, and Minster. The map is divided into two sections by a vertical line, with the left section showing the coastline and the right section showing the inland areas. The text 'East coast nature reserves sinking fast into the sea, threatening birds in wetlands' is overlaid on the map.

A high-contrast, black and white photograph. In the center, a person stands in a field, their figure silhouetted against a bright, glowing light source in the sky. The person appears to be looking up at the light. The foreground is dark and textured, possibly grass or low-lying vegetation. The background is dominated by the bright light, which creates a strong contrast with the surrounding dark areas. The overall mood is mysterious and dramatic.

accept that there are places where the best policy may lie not to build or maintain expensive coastal defences, but to let the sea have its way. However, they want new wetland habitats to be created to replace those areas which are lost to the waves - and since that will usually involve taking farmland out of production this would not come cheap.

A final decision on the new inquiry's terms of reference is likely to be made by Government and Opposition party leaders before the Dail meets on 10 and 11 September to consider the McCracken report.

The Government will ask the McCracken tribunal to continue inquiries into who besides Mr Dunne put funds into the so-called Anshecher deposits, a series of secret numbered bank accounts at one point containing £38m, from which Mr Haughey received payments. There is growing pressure for scrutiny of a large cash donation handed to the foreign minister Ray Burke during the 1988 election.

مركزا من الاصل

Never mind the mockers, Del Boy's little plastic runaround is about to make an electrifying comeback...

Nicholas Schoon
Environment Correspondent

A pollution-free, electric version of the three-wheeled Reliant Robin car is under development. An advanced prototype is due to be completed this autumn, and the battery-powered production version could be on sale by the end of next year.

The little runabout is best known for mobilising Del Boy and Rodney in the BBC series *Only Fools and Horses*. But its real life manufacturer in Tamworth, Staffordshire, has horizons even wider than *Trotters*. Independent Trading, Reliant hope to sell some of the electric Robins in smoggy southern California, where there are Government incentives to promote sales of non-polluting cars.

The company is aiming for a car with a top speed of 65 mph and a range of 70 miles before an overnight battery recharge is needed. "It has got to be able to keep up with the other traffic and go a reasonable distance," said Reliant's managing director and part-owner, Jonathan Heynes, a former executive with Jaguar Cars.

But acceleration would be faster than the existing petrol-engined Robin, whose 850cc aluminium engine gives it a top speed of 80 mph.

The reason why the fibreglass-bodied Robin is well suited for conversion to electric drive is its weight - just two-thirds that of a four-wheel, steel-bodied car of similar size.

That lightness sharply reduces the amount of power it consumes in accelerating. And that, in turn, allows the Robin to attack the highest bugbear of electric vehicles: in order to have a tolerable range between recharges they need to carry a large weight and volume of batteries.

The three-wheeler should need less battery bulk. The vehicle uses one lightweight, high-efficiency and British-built Lynch electric motor. The plan is to sell the car at a premium price above the £7,000 which the petrol version



Triple whammy: Del Boy immortalised the Reliant Robin and the three-wheelers have even been converted into boats (top). However it is now hoped that Robins can prove a cheaper, more efficient alternative to sleeker electric sports cars made by General Motors in America (below)



employs 110 people and produces 25 petrol Robins a week after being mothballed for months. In its heyday in the

1970s 2,500 staff made nearly 300 vehicles a week including the now-defunct Scimitar sports car. During the 1990s the company was twice in receivership and once in administration. Then Mr Heynes, aged 51, purchased Reliant in partnership

with an anonymous backer and the Mancunian entrepreneur Kevin Leech, who owns Land's End and John O'Groats. Mr Heynes said: "It has always been the parent companies which have run into problems, never Reliant itself. It's a very good trading game, and we're convinced we can turn it round."

The Robin can be driven by people with only a motorbike licence and the tax disc is half the price of a conventional car. For the electric version, that disc will be even cheaper.

Ashdown seeks Scots vote reform

Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

Voting reform for local elections should be one of the first acts of the new Scottish Parliament, the Liberal Democrat leader Paddy Ashdown said yesterday.

On a visit to Scotland to campaign for a "yes, yes" vote in the devolution referendum on 11 September, Mr Ashdown said proportional representation could help to prevent the in-fighting which had characterised local politics in areas such as Paisley.

Mr Ashdown was making a speech in the former Royal High School in Edinburgh, the building earmarked for the new Parliament until ministers decided that it would not be suitable and launched a competition for architects to build a new one.

Mr Ashdown pointed out that the new Parliament would have the power to change local voting systems, and argued that it should use it.

"The cynicism, the factional in-fighting, the bad mouthing, the destruction of public trust and private lives - all are products of a voting system that keeps unrepresentative cliques in unchallenged and unfettered power for years on end."

"We are not talking about the failings of one party or another. We are talking about the kind of politics that develops when one party has an unhealthy and unrepresentative monopoly of power," he said.

A reformed Scottish political system would lead the way towards the modernisation of politics across the United Kingdom, he added. Liberal Democrat sources argued last

night that PR for local authorities in Scotland would be in the interests of all the parties. The Conservatives and Scottish National Party would gain seats from it as well as themselves, while many new Labour members could see it as a way of riding their party of factionalism.

Mr Ashdown also attacked the Conservatives' constitutional affairs spokesman, Michael Ancram, accusing him of "insult, misinformation and lies". Mr Ancram had claimed on Wednesday that a Scottish parliament would create a "cesspool of resentment" which would lead to the break-up of the UK.

The Defoece Secretary, George Robertson, also chose to attack Mr Ancram, a former Northern Ireland minister, for "hypocrisy" while campaigning in Dundee.

"How can Michael Ancram parade as the hammer of Scottish devolution in August 1997 when he was the salesman of Northern Ireland devolution in April of 1997?"

"How can he be taken seriously for a moment by mature and thinking voters when he tells them that an English legislature would open the door to instant separation when he was telling Northern Ireland voters four months ago that a Belfast legislature would strengthen the Union?" he asked.

Elsewhere in the campaign the focus switched back to the economic issues, with the Scottish Secretary Donald Dewar set to meet sceptical leaders of the Scottish CBI in Edinburgh in an attempt to convince them that devolution would be good for business.

Letters, page 13
Leading article, page 13

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Cook's tour: Foreign Secretary promises to concentrate efforts on trying to snuff out international trafficking at its source

Boost for MI6 in war on drug trade

Jason Bennett
Crime Correspondent

The rise in international drug trafficking was identified yesterday as one of the most worrying and dangerous developments facing Britain.

According to Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, tackling the drug trade abroad is to become a top priority for agencies such as MI6, customs, and MI5.

Speaking in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, he insisted that this was "not simply a restatement of old policy; we will refocus all resources to make this a top priority". In future the organisations will concentrate on trying to stifle the production of drugs at their source rather than just catching traffickers as they enter Britain. To reinforce this commitment greater resources are to be allocated to MI6 and the listening base at the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) in Cheltenham. So far this year £42m has been spent on anti-drug measures abroad.

Mr Cook yesterday highlighted the drug trade from South East Asia, and in particular Burma, where he said the military government was conniving with drug barons. Heroin is now the most common class A drug smuggled into Britain. Most of

it comes from opium grown in the "Golden Crescent" of Turkey, Pakistan, and Afghanistan and arrives via countries such as the Netherlands, Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Hungary. Drug agencies estimate that only 10 per cent of the heroin that comes into Britain, most of which involves Turkish drug gangs, is intercepted en route.

Heroin also reaches Europe from South East Asia, smuggled by sea through Vladivostok and by land through Mongolia and

Cocaine is being smuggled into Europe (through the Russian Federation, Poland and south-eastern Europe).

The former Soviet Bloc has also become a major source of synthetic drugs, such as speed, produced in laboratories of Poland, the Czech Republic and Latvia. The largest producers of ecstasy are still based in western European countries particularly the Netherlands.

Although the Secret Intelligence Service, MI5 and Customs and Excise will be used in the

Mr Cook's announcement yesterday, which did not mention whether extra money was being made available, suggests that officers are likely to be reassigned to investigate drug barons rather than Soviet spies.

In his authoritative new book *New Drugs, Old Dangers*, Michael Smith reveals that MI6 has been involved in a number of successful anti-drug operations. One in 1991 began when Scotland Yard detectives arrested two Czech "businessmen" in London with a consignment of cocaine, and stumbled across a major drug route from Colombia, via Poland and Czechoslovakia, to Germany, the Netherlands and Britain.

Unable to operate abroad, the police called in MI6 which helped to close the route and convict several traffickers. MI6 has set up a "Global Issues Controller" to target drug traffickers that includes officers working on organised crime.

Similar arrangements are in place at GCHQ, which monitors radio messages. According to Mr Smith, GCHQ has adapted its operational techniques to intercept drug smugglers before they get to Britain. Liaison between the intelligence services and the police is conducted through the National Criminal Intelligence Service.

'It's not a restatement of old policy; we will refocus all resources to make this top a priority'

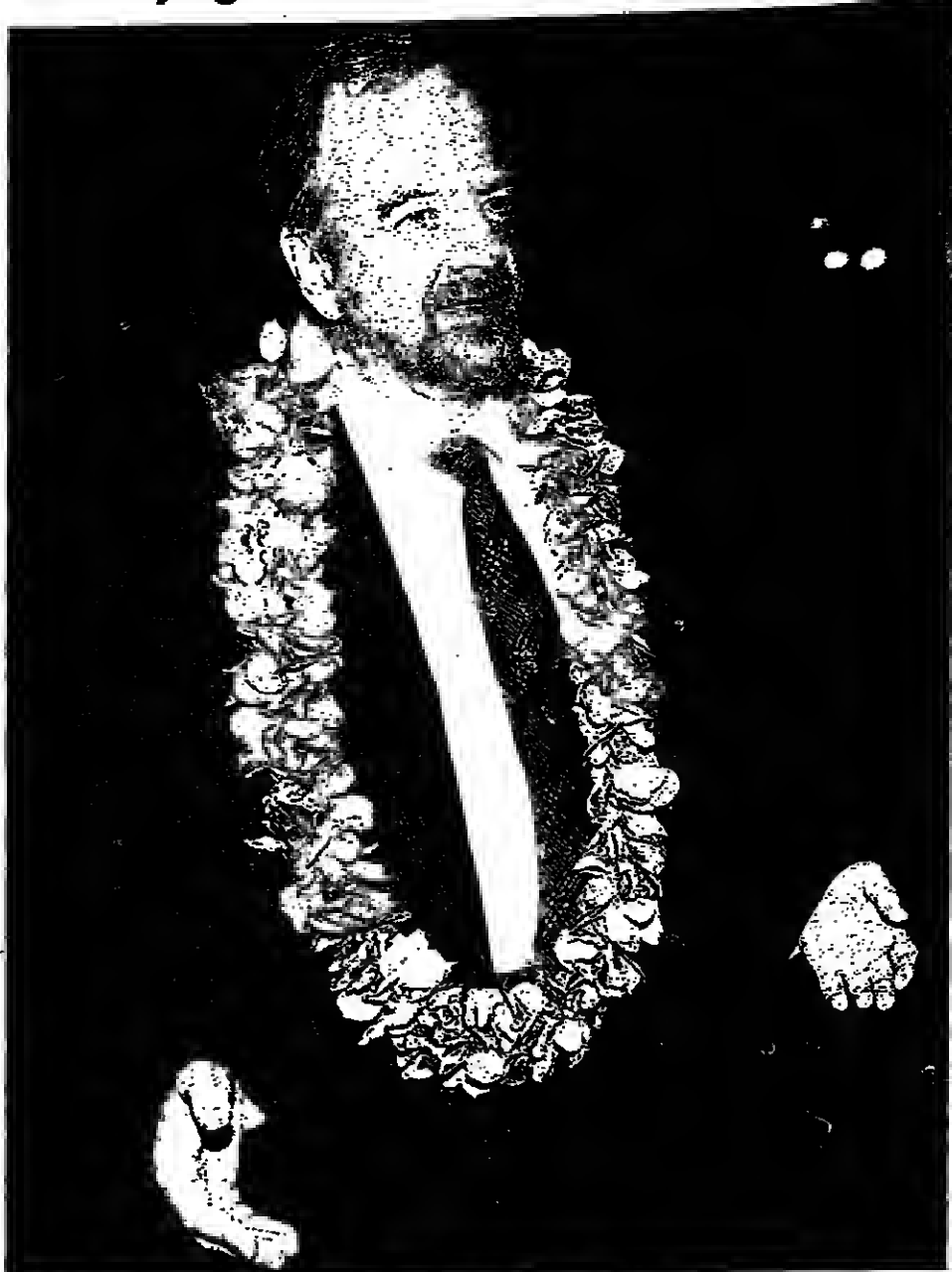
the Russian federation. The territories of the former Soviet Union are increasingly used as transit points by traffickers of heroin and cannabis resin.

The majority of the cocaine, which is being seized in the UK and Europe in record amounts, is grown in South America, particularly Colombia and Bolivia, and smuggled through Spain and Portugal.

Drug cartels have also moved in to exploit the political upheavals in Eastern Europe.

drugs battle, Mr Cook does not believe that British military forces will be used in South East Asia as countries like Malaysia and Indonesia have powerful armed forces. In other parts of the world, such as the Caribbean and Colombia, Britain provides specialist training by the SAS and support by the Royal Navy to help curb the drugs trade.

The intelligence services have been increasingly involved in the battle against the drugs trade since the end of the Cold War.



A garlanded Robin Cook arriving in Jakarta, Indonesia, yesterday Photograph: AFP

Agents aim to break hold of barons

Matthew Chance
Bangkok

Details of new plans for the Secret Intelligence Service are, naturally, secret. But moving, at times, outside the parameters of the law, undercover MI6 operatives using skills refined during the Cold War will have the freedom to collect data, develop contacts and in some instances, help to co-ordinate military-style raids against drug installations, like heroin processing factories or opium "farms". They are also expected to record information to help guide criminal case against drug barons, smugglers and officials involved in the trade.

Rather than taking direct action, their real value in the global fight against trafficking may be the political pressure British intelligence can help bring to bear on countries like Burma, linked with drug trafficking at the highest levels.

"There's really no question of them leaving a trail of dead bodies behind them; MI6 are far too subtle for that," according to Richard Dickens, an intelligence adviser to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme in Bangkok. "But they can be expected to manipulate the situation on the ground to their best advantage, and, for want of another word, to agitate."

This "agitation" could take the form of blackmail: exposing the links of high-ranking individuals to the drug trade could be used as leverage to pressure governments into taking action against other elements involved in trafficking.

"The aim is to break the trafficking loop," said Mr Dickens, "to seize money, to freeze assets, to stop the drug trade, even if that means bending morals or sending people to the firing squad in some countries."

Although the heroin which can be bought on the streets of Britain originates largely from Afghanistan, not Burma, British officials are acutely aware of the potential threat posed by South East Asian heroin producers. If UN negotiators, for instance, succeed in arm-twisting the militant Taliban Islamic government, which controls most of Afghanistan's opium-growing regions, into clamping down on their people's drug production, South East Asia could re-emerge as a key supplier of heroin to British addicts.

"This British initiative looks like it fits well into the global strategy we are trying hard to promote," said the Vincent McLellan, the UN's drug control chief in Bangkok, who added that the fight against trafficking was "a global problem".

"This is an exciting time for those of us who have been watching the steady rise of South East Asia's drug producers. Turn MI6 loose in Asia, give them carte blanche to operate in this area, and they will make a difference," he said.

Walking a fine line on human rights

Steve Crawshaw
Kuala Lumpur

Robin Cook yesterday walked out on the tightrope of his new foreign policy, weaving the twin themes of trade and human rights together into a single, cautiously balanced speech.

Speaking in the Malaysian capital, Kuala Lumpur, on the first leg of a five-day trip to south-east Asia, the Foreign Secretary talked of the "global imperative" of South East Asia and the "exciting new partnership" between Asia and Europe. At the same time, he insisted that human rights were "fundamental to foreign policy".

Just a few hours later, he arrived in Indonesia - the subject on which Mr Cook has seemed in most danger of being hoist with his own ethical petard. In yesterday's speech, he sought to avoid offending his hosts in the region, while not laying himself open to accusations of self-out.

Until now, his main audience has been the electorate at home, where talk of ethics goes down well. In this region, things are less comfortable. Many countries in the region are more concerned about flourishing business than about human rights. Mr Cook thus gave the human-rights pill a sugary, business-friendly coating.

Above all, his speech was upbeat. He insisted that the turbulence in the financial markets, which continued yesterday, "should not obscure the underlying strength of the economies of South East Asia". He described the powerful Association of South-East Asian Nations (Asean), as "a success by any measure". "No previous generation of national leaders could have foreseen close to 500 million people of various origins building an economic and political community as successful as Asean."

In this context, his main selling pitch was that Britain should be regarded as a key linkman, helping to build a stronger relationship between Asia and Europe - in effect, the missing side of a global triangle. Mr Cook pointed to the close links between Europe and America, on the one hand, and the United States and Asia, on the other, and argued: "We must balance [these links] with strong ties between Europe and Asia, Britain. Mr Cook argued, is "uniquely qualified to act as one end of the bridge."

He brandished Britain's new Europhile credentials, saying: "We are no longer a marginalised offshore island on the sidelines of debate in Europe, but a leading player of equal influence to the major countries of the Continent." Britain will next year host the second Asia-Europe Meeting (Asem). The Asem process, said Mr Cook, is "a great opportunity... let us seize it".

He offered a list of six areas where he was seeking partner-

ship. Five of these - economic partnership, security, the UN, environment and drugs - are uncontroversial. Dropped in the middle, however, came the hand grenade - "perhaps the most important, because it underpins all the others".

Mr Cook declared: "Promotion of personal freedom is central to the goals we all share: free and open societies, dynamic and modern economies as part of a safe and prosperous international community... Every country is a member of the international community and it is therefore reasonable to require every government to abide by the rules of membership."

In a clear effort to avoid stepping on regional toes, Mr Cook insisted: "This is not a matter of division between north and south." Taking an almost apologetic tone, he said that "no one country should lecture other countries on their duty". None the less, he continued: "The right to enjoy our freedoms at home comes with the obligation to support the human rights of others abroad." He added that the principles should "find support in both developed and developing countries".

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A stranger's tour of hashish's dark heartland

THE MOROCCAN HARVEST

Sightseers are not welcome, writes Elizabeth Nash, in the second part of her series on marijuana in Morocco

Ketama — I just want to look around, I said innocently, but Mustafa was doubtful from the start about my plan to drive with him to Ketama, the heart of Morocco's hashish territory. It was 50 miles (80km) east along the Rif from the ancient Berber town of Chefchaouen, but locals warned it would take three hours.

The mountain road started winding circuitously just beyond the Gendarmerie checkpoint on the outskirts of Chefchaouen, keeping our speed below 20mph. Emboldened by our slowness, young men squatting by off-white Mercedes darted into the road brandishing bulging plastic bags.

Clucking a Rabat-registered hired vehicle driven by a European female, they whistled and hissed, made huge smoking gestures with their hands and shouted "Hashiiiiiii!" as we drove by. Others held out white clubs like those used by jugglers. What are they for, I asked Mustafa.

"They're to defend yourself against attackers if your car should break down at night on the road," I digested this quietly for a while, taking in the warm sweet gusts of kif, the cannabis plant, buffeting through the window. Perhaps it was my imagination that the bitter metallic stench of "bazuko" — crack — occasionally spiked my nostrils too.

The road became steeper, passing amid pines and majestic cedars. A tacit agreement exists between the authorities and the kif producers that they should not plant along the main roads, but from time to time we glimpsed dark green kif fields, one not far from the gendarmerie headquarters outside Ketama.

Nearby was the town's only hotel, where we pulled up. Clusters of tall, severe young men enveloped in long hooded robes strolled or hung about, eyeing the interlopers with hostility.

In the hotel, a request for lunch was greeted with amusement. The shutters to all the rooms were drawn, the swimming pool was without water, the taps were without water. Mustafa went to buy some food in the street, forbidding me to accompany him. He returned with a flat round loaf, grilled lamb kebabs and a sheep's head which he picked clean with relish.

After downing five beers within minutes, he refused to let me drive back the way we had come. A wind was up and a storm was brewing. "If we have to stop, these traffickers will bother you. Or the police will think you're buying, and search the car, search your body, question you for hours." He proposed a quieter route, the coast road that was more beautiful.

We headed north along a foul potholed track. For hours we crept along amid thunder, lightning and torrential rain or mist that appeared to boil off the road. Despite the frightful conditions, in this godforsaken mountain top, there was constant activity. Cars loomed up, and as we stopped to let them ease past, their occupants urged us to buy. Groups of men loitered by the roadside, mule-drawn traps trotted by, a solitary figure in flowing cream robes, his vast lampshade-like hat untrammelled by bobbing pompoms and covered with a cowl, strode like a ghostly monk. Not a gendarme was to be seen in territory that tribesmen have controlled for centuries.

This was the heartland of the legendary leader Abdelkrim, whose Berber warriors declared an independent Rif republic in the Twenties. They defeated and humiliated Spain's occupying forces — using the same guerrilla tactics the Spanish invented to resist Napoleon a century before — and Rifans have since risen up periodically against Rabat.

Eventually the mountain fell like a rampart into the sea and we reached the little port of El Jebha, thought to be an important departure point for hashish smuggled to Europe. It seemed even more sinister than Ketama and after driving by a couple of dark bars, a proposal to stop for tea died on my lips.

The coast road is dotted with little white watchtowers, guarded by helmeted auxiliary forces who saluted as we passed. Morocco spends \$80m (£50m) a year on 5,000 extra security forces for the northern region to stop drug trafficking and illegal emigration. But the coast is hundreds of miles long, and traffickers — helped sometimes by the Italian Mafia or Britons from the Spanish coast — slip rubber inflatable dinghies into the gentle sea and load 30kg balls on to yachts or fishing boats bound for Spain.

Night fell. The landscape softened and the weather improved, the scent of mint and rosemary now floated on the air. Mustafa was indignant at our slow pace, caused by fatigue and my shameful inability to see in the dark. Finally, we crawled home and he reproached me gently.

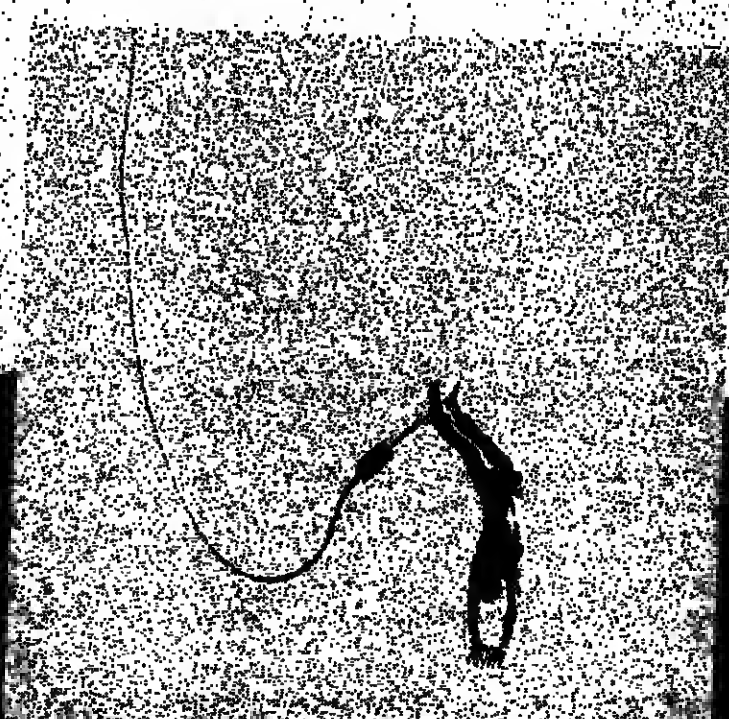
"In this part of the Rif it either rains or it's misty. The roads are bad and the people are bad. Anyone who comes here is assumed to be after one thing only. It is no place for sightseers." Quite so, I agreed.



Cottage industry: Hashish being processed at a farmhouse drug factory. The woman on the left is grinding kif leaves to dust. Photograph: AP

Tall, severe young men enveloped in long hooded robes strolled or hung about, eyeing the interlopers with hostility

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significant shorts

Venezuela prison riot claims 42 lives

At least 42 prisoners were knifed or beaten to death, and another 22 injured, in a riot between rival gangs at notorious El Dorado prison in Venezuela. In a prison system noted for its brutality and uncontrolled violence, it was the deadliest incident since January 1994, when 109 inmates died in a riot and fire at Sabaneta prison in Maracaibo.

AP — El Dorado

Kinshasa blocks UN probe

The government in Kinshasa said a U.N. mission investigating alleged massacres in the former Zaire had broken agreements and would have to wait until a parallel African team arrived before continuing the probe. It also accused investigators of meeting members of the political opposition since their arrival on Sunday and questioned the neutrality of Togolese jurist Asu-Koffi Amega, who leads the mission.

Reuters — Kinshasa

US queries Moscow N-blast

The United States has asked Moscow about a "seismic event" 12 days ago at or near a nuclear test site to help determine whether Russia breached a self-imposed moratorium on nuclear test blasts, the White House said. Russia, which said in 1992 that it was halting nuclear explosions, denied it had carried out a test and said it was sticking to its moratorium.

Reuters — Washington

Primates on the decline

Logging, hunting and the steady loss of forests have made primates the most imperilled group of animals on the planet. Only one species is increasing in numbers: humans. Nearly half of the 235 primates, including chimpanzees which are our closest evolutionary relatives, are threatened with extinction. Another 20 percent are approaching that status, said report published by Worldwatch Institute.

AP — Washington

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international

Queen losing stamp of authority

Australia ready to decide on republican vote

Robert Milliken
Sydney

Australia will elect delegates later this year to a constitutional convention that will decide whether the country should go ahead and hold a referendum on becoming a republic.

The convention, to be held in the first half of 1998, will be the most searching examination Australians have conducted on the question of abolishing the monarchy and, if opinion polls are any guide, it could be the precursor for a referendum on a republic passing a popular vote early in the next century.

The conservative coalition government led by John Howard promised the convention when it was elected last year, even though Mr Howard himself is a monarchist who has done his best to bury the republican debate. But opinion polls - which show that more than half Australians want a republic, a continuing campaign by the Australian Republican Movement and the "coming out" as republicans of several prominent MPs in Mr Howard's Liberal Party - left him no option but to go ahead with his promise.

When he put forward legislation to set up the convention, however, it struck trouble in the senate, the upper house of federal parliament, where the Democrats, a small left-of-centre party, and some Independent MPs hold the balance of power. They and the opposition Labor

Party were outraged by Mr Howard's plan for half the 152 delegates to the proposed convention to be elected and the rest to be appointed by the government. For the elected half, the government is proposing a voluntary postal ballot. Labor and its republican allies in the senate demanded that voting should be compulsory, as it is for general elections in Australia, and that all delegates be elected.

The legislation failed its first passage through the senate, and looked likely to fail again when the government re-submitted it, killing off the convention altogether, something Mr Howard would have been quite happy about. But a last-minute compromise yesterday by Bob Brown, a Green Senate member from Tasmania, means it will now go ahead. Mr Brown announced he would abandon his opposition to the voluntary postal ballot because he would rather have such a convention than none at all. Convention delegates will come from a cross-section of groups.

The convention is likely to re-ignite the country's republic debate, which was started by Paul Keating, the former Labor prime minister, who planned to hold a referendum on the issue by 2000. Despite Mr Howard's reticence, republicanism is likely to gather momentum as Australians prepare to mark their biggest national birthday in 100 years, the centenary of federation in 2001.



Linked lands: Stamps symbolising the Queen's role as Head of State in some of the 16 countries

How real is Her Majesty's rule over 16 states?

Christopher Bellamy
Defence Correspondent

Even if Australia decides to reject the monarchy, the "Queen's Realm" will still include a land area of about four and half million square miles. Including the United Kingdom and Australia, it comprises 16 of the Commonwealth's 53 sovereign states. They range from vast states such as the former dominions of Australia and Canada through to small islands like St Christopher and Nevis, and they are all constitutional monarchies, with the Queen and her Privy Council as the ultimate authority. Their heads of government, including the UK's, are prime ministers.

The constitutional position is complicated: when the Queen is in Australia, she is there as Queen of Australia, not as Queen of Britain and Northern Ireland. However, the Queen's authority is increasingly recognised as an anachronism, going back to the days when the Queen was direct head of state. Most of the Caribbean countries now want to sever contact with the British monarchy.

The other Commonwealth states are either republics, with a president or executive president as head of state (like Nigeria), or "national monarchies", of which there are five: Brunei, Lesotho, Malaysia, Swaziland and Tonga. If Australia were to become a republic, it would join 32 others in the Commonwealth, reducing the Queen's Realm to 15, but practical effects would be minimal.

There are also numerous dependencies with a total population of about 150,000, including Gibraltar and Montserrat. They are not members of the Commonwealth in their own right, but are dependent on states which are.

The 16 Queen's realms, apart from the UK itself, all have governors-general, who represent the Queen as head of state. The Governor-General in Australia is Sir William Deane. In practice,

the latter's functions are largely ceremonial. Governor-generals are appointed by the Queen and have no political, legislative or executive authority. For most people the only practical role served by the link with the Queen is as a route for final appeal against death sentences. This link has increasingly become a problem, however, because it complicates human rights issues.

Jamaica is a case in point. The Queen is represented by Sir Howard Cooke, the head of government is the Prime Minister, P.J. Patterson, who is elected in much the same way as Tony Blair in Britain. Jamaica has its own privy council, the

Realms of recognition

The following constitutional monarchies recognise the Queen as Head of State: Antigua/Barbuda; Australia; Bahamas; Barbados; Belize; Canada; Grenada; Jamaica; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; St Christopher Nevis; St Lucia; St Vincent and the Grenadines; Solomon Islands; Tuvalu; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and its dependencies.

Within the Commonwealth there are also 32 republics and five indigenous monarchies. The Queen's only relationship with these countries is as head of the Commonwealth.

highest court in the land, but an appellant has the right of appeal to the Queen's Privy Council.

"The death-row Privy Council appeal is one of the most infamous uses", said Mischela Mills of the Commonwealth Secretariat. As a Jamaican - and therefore a Commonwealth citizen - she has the right to vote in the UK, but not the right to a British passport.

Fiji, which left the Commonwealth some years ago, wants to rejoin and will do so unless other members object. This would mean Fiji accepting the Queen as head of the Commonwealth, but probably not as head of state.

Canberra attacks MP's racism campaign

The Australian government yesterday launched a renewed attack on Pauline Hanson, the independent MP who opposes Asian immigration and welfare for Aborigines, when it released a white paper on foreign policy repudiating Ms Hanson's policies, writes Robert Milliken.

The white paper, Australia's first such document on foreign and trade policy, is the latest and strongest

move by Canberra to counter the political impact of Ms Hanson, particularly among Australia's Asian neighbours, where there has been mounting concern over her campaign. Ms Hanson has been the centre of a political storm in Australia ever since she made her maiden speech in parliament almost a year ago calling for an end to Asian immigration and public spending on Aboriginal welfare.

Her mixture of raw nationalism, isolationism and racial bigotry has divided Australians and caused problems for the conservative coalition government led by John Howard, who has come under fire for his failure to repudiate Ms Hanson decisively enough.

A few weeks ago, the government set up a special information unit in the department of foreign affairs and trade in Canberra specifically to counter the

Hanson agenda in Asia. It will spend millions of dollars mounting exhibitions in Hong Kong, China and other Asian centres, from which Australia has been drawing increasing numbers of its skilled immigrants, to emphasise Australia's commitment to racial equality.

The white paper that Alexander Downer, the foreign minister, released yesterday, followed up this latest campaign by placing racial equality

and human rights at the centre of foreign policy, and warning that any damage to Australia's reputation from the race debate could seriously damage it in the Asian region, the focus of most of Australia's trade and the source of about one-quarter of its annual intake of immigrants.

It says: "Racial discrimination is not only morally repugnant. It repudiates Australia's best interests."

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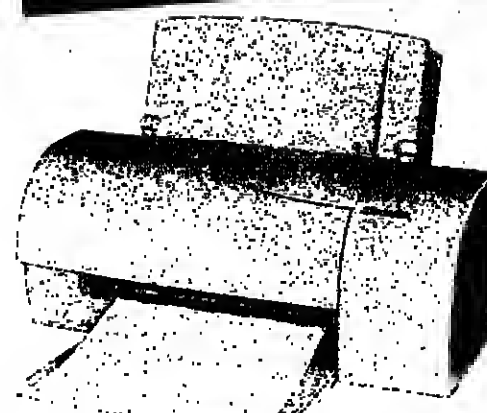
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Noble was 12 years old when he made his first BBC broadcast, one voice lost among the

calling.) Noble immediately joined the company, did his first acting in a political travesty of *Babes in the Wood*, and toured in the famous *Waiting for Lefty*. ("With John Slater, Alfie Bass and Bill Owen - when he was still Rowbotham!") In 1935 Noble narrated *Symphony of Youth* in an open-air production in Brockwell Park. Joss of the *Star* caricatured him; Noble bought 25 copies.

With the start of the Second World War, Noble, using his

Years later Noble would return to films, this time behind the camera. He worked as associate producer on *The Runaway Bus* (1954), a starring vehicle for the young Frankie Howerd, *To Dorothy a Son* (1954), with Shelley Winters, *Lost* (1955) with David Farrar, and *Fun At St. Fanny's* (1956) which was built

This massive amount of work made Noble the best known name in popular screen journalism, seconded only by Raymond Leader, the pen name he was forced to use when his own appeared rather too frequently. Soon he was broadcasting regularly in the BBC's *Film Time*, where he resided for four years, and *Luxembourg's Movie Magazine*, hosted by Wilfrid Thomas and sponsored by Silvikrin Hair Tonic. (The stu-

Collic Knox, the famous newspaper critic, called Noble "Britain's walking encyclopaedia of films" when he introduced "Can You Beat the Expert", a new regular feature to the monthly magazine *ABC Film Review* in March 1951. Readers' tricky questions were pulled out of the hat and Noble's off-the-cuff answers were taken down and published. The first was an easy one - "What was Alfred Hitchcock's first American film?" - as Noble had recently written on Hitch for the British Film Institute. "*Rebecca*," was the answer. But he was eventually caught by Mr

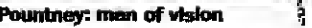
One of Noble's innumerable shilling film books Denis Gifford Collection

form a new glossy weekly, *Screen International*, on 6 September 1975. Noble was appointed editor. But far from fading out, his gossip writing grew. At last he was legitimately part of cinema showbiz. His weekly column, called "In Confidence", name-dropped at

Denis Gifford
Peter Noble, actor, producer, songwriter, journalist, writer and broadcaster; born London 18 July 1917; married first Sylvia Durham, second Marianne Stone (two daughters); died London 17 August 1997.

In 1945 he moved to Bedfordshire, and was for 30 years a lay-clerk at New College, Bedford under David Lumsden and Edward Higginbottom, whilst continuing to demonstrate his ability as a gifted conductor through his association with the Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham.

Those who largely renounce conventional career opportunities to fulfil the exacting and unsocial hours required of a church chorister and freelance conductor receive but little remuneration, but Pountney successfully supported his



Andrea Argenti
Edward Willoughby Pountney, civil servant and musician; born Birmingham 27 April 1910; twice married (one son, one daughter); died Clevedon, Somerset 11 August 1997.

Milans del I

Bosch

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son by Marguerite Duras); died Paris 20 August 1997.



Changing of the Guard
The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Wales mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Scots Guards.

The resistance of the Francoist troops became a symbol of heroism and sacrifice that was used time and again in Francoist

Back in Spain in the final years of Franco's rule, Milans

He was still fighting this rear-guard action against the despised politicians and trade

That night King Juan Carlos appeared on television calling on the armed forces to back his authority. He telephoned Milans del Bosch personally in the early hours of the 24 February to persuade him to remain loyal. Grudgingly, Milans del Bosch stood down his troops. Unable

to avoid responsibility for his part in the uprising, he was dismissed from his command later the same day. In March 1981, he was tried along with 24 other military officers and given a jail sentence of 26 years for rebellion, and cashiered from the army.

Milans del Bosch was eventually freed in 1991 after serving almost 10 years of his sentence, and afterwards lived quietly in Madrid with his family. Never at any point did he express any regret for his actions, but tried until his final days to be allowed to regain his position in the army, the only thing that had ever really mattered to him.

Nick Calster



Milans del Bosch: hardline

Jaime Milans del Bosch y Ussia, army officer; born Madrid 8 June 1915; married Amparo Portoles y Balaguer (three sons); died Madrid 26 July 1997.

Changing of the Guard
The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Wales mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Scots Guards.

Lord Attenborough, actor, producer and director, 74; Professor Laing Barden, Vice-Chancellor, University of Northumbria at Newcastle, 66; Dr Yvonne Burne, Headmistress, City of London School for Girls, 50; Sir Julius Chan, former prime minister, Papua New Guinea, 58; Mr Michael Clarke, Keeper, National Gallery of Scotland, 45; Mr Robert Cormack, former ambassador to Sweden, 62; Dame Mary Donaldson,

former, and first woman Lord Mayor of London, 76; Sir Nigel Foulkes, former chairman, Civil Aviation Authority, 76; Mr Elliott Gould, actor, 59; Mr Thom Gunn, poet, 68; Mr Lenny Henry, comedian, 39; Lord Huxley of North Bradley, former BBC chairman, 74; Miss Angela Huth, writer, 39; Mr Michael Jackson, singer, 39; Lord King of Wartnam, president of British Airways, 79; Mr Tony Newton, former government minister, 60; Mr Dennis Pann, former chairman, Alcan Aluminium, 63;

Mr Norman Platt, former artistic director and founder of Kiri Opera, 77; **Mr Greg Pope MP**, an Assistant Whip, 37; **Sir Evelyn de Rothschild**, chairman, N.M. Rothschild & Sons, 66; **Mr Frank Roy MP**, 39; **Ms Geraldine Smith MP**, 36; **Mr Dick Spring**, Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs, 47.

Anniversaries

Births: Jean-Baptiste Colbert, statesman and French Envoys to the French

Navy, 1819; John Locke, philosopher, 1632; Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, painter, 1780; Oliver Wendell Holmes, physician and writer, 1809; John Leech, caricaturist and illustrator, 1817; Maurice-Polydore Marie-Bernard Maeterlinck, poet and playwright, 1862; Jack (Weldon Leo) Teagarden, jazz musician, vocalist and bandleader, 1905; Ingrid Bergman, actress, 1915. Deaths: John Fletcher, playwright, 1625; Louis Couperin, composer, 1661; Frédéric-César David, composer,

1870: The Rev William Archibald Spooner, perpetrator of "Spoonerisms", 1930; Eamon de Valera, statesman, 1975; Ingrid Bergman, actress, 1982; Lee Marvin, actor, 1987; Mary Pearson Norton, children's author [of *The Borrowers*], 1992. On this day [of The Spanish fleet] was defeated by Edward III at Winchelsea, 1350; the Factory Act, regulating the employment of children, was passed, 1833; the city of Melbourne, Australia, was founded, 1835; the Treaty of Nanking was signed, ending the Anglo-Chinese

war, and agreeing the lease of the Hong Kong territories to Britain, 1842; the *Sporting Times* published an "obituary" for English cricket, and first mentioned "the Ashes", 1882; the Rugby League (originally "Northern Union"), was formed from 21 clubs in the North of England, 1895; the Soviet Union exploded a hydrogen bomb, 1953. Today is the Feast Day of St Edwald of Cerne, St Modericus or Merry, St Sabina of Rome and the Beheading of John the Baptist.

Synagogue services
Details of synagogue services to be held tomorrow may be obtained by telephoning the following. Sabbath begins in London at 7.39pm.

United Synagogue: 0121-343 2969.
Federation of Synagogues: 0181-262 2263.
Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues: 0171-594 1663.
Reform Synagogue: 0171-594 1331.
Great Synagogue: 0171-349 4731.
Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation: 0171-285 2573.
New London Synagogue (Mosaic): 0171-325 1026.

Changing of the Guard
The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Wales mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Scots Guards.

It's a matter of life and death, Mr Trimble



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In a few days, the people of Scotland and Wales go to the polls to say what they think of passing limited powers of government from London to Edinburgh and Cardiff. At first blush, it seems curious that the early days of the Government should be dominated by unfinished business from 18 years ago, rerunning the disastrous referendums of 1979. This is, after all, New Labour, quite unconnected with the failed policies and ideas of the past. But the truth is that devolution was not a failed policy, simply a difficult one, and it is essential that the business of devolution be completed. One of the most serious charges in the court of history against the Conservative Party is that it failed in 18 years to make the long-overdue adjustment within the United Kingdom to the principle of self-determination which has spread, with liberal democracy, across the globe.

There are other parts of the United Kingdom, however, where this process of adjustment needs to be completed. Yesterday the cause of Cornish nationalism suffered a setback as one of its poets was found to be freely plagiarising Scottish verses. But today the adjustment process in Northern Ireland takes an infinitely more important and more serious step forward.

Sinn Féin and the IRA have long sustained their claim to a united Ireland by appealing to the principle of self-determination, in their case of the

people of the whole island of Ireland. Tony Blair has been criticised for promising too many referendums. If anything, he should be taken to task for promising too few. In addition to next month's votes in Scotland and Wales, there is an urgent need to hold referendums on Northern Ireland's future both in Northern Ireland and in the Republic. This is the best way, ultimately, to undercut Sinn Féin's pretence to the high moral ground, because the one thing that would not come out of such a simultaneous referendum would be a mandate for a united Ireland. The majority in the north want to remain part of the United Kingdom, while the majority in the south do not want to absorb the north at the price of taking on a mirror image of the last 25 years of violence.

The only referendums in which Sinn Féin could win a Yes vote for a united Ireland would be in west Belfast and (possibly) New York. So an all-Ireland test of opinion would puncture the romance of Gerry Adams's claim to be fighting for the right of self-determination. Once the end point of the "peace process" is defined in this way, as "not a united Ireland", it is difficult to see why Sinn Féin and the IRA are so keen on talks, and the Ulster Unionists so reluctant. This is the underlying reason why David McKitterick, our Ireland editor, expressed optimism last week about the prospects for lasting peace.

But David Trimble, the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, has yet to step up on to the pedestal provided, before our optimism is justified. Yesterday, he continued to keep his options open and his guard guarded, but the fact that he is talking to the Prime Minister about how talks with Sinn Féin might take place, rather than telling the world from the steps of Downing Street why they will not, is already a half-step up.

Today, Marjorie Mowlam is expected to announce that the IRA ceasefire qualifies Sinn Féin to take part in the talks. It is certainly true that, so far, the second ceasefire has been different

from the first in that there have been no punishment beatings or low-level gangsterism carried out under its fringes.

The critical outstanding issue is that of the IRA's refusal to surrender weapons. Mr Trimble stands on a firm platform of public opinion – across the UK – by stressing the repugnance of talking to terrorists or their apologists while they reserve the right to resort to violence. But Mr Blair, quite rightly, is putting pressure on him to compromise on the real-world grounds that there is no alternative. (In passing, it is worth pouring a dose of heavy scepticism over

ex-spy David Shayler's claim that MI5 could have "finished off" the IRA – the only way to stem republican violence is to "finish off" the social and ideological conditions in which it flourishes.)

While Mr Blair and Dr Mowlam are under an obligation to come up with procedural devices and forms of words to finesse the weapons issue, the primary responsibility, not just to the Unionist population but to posterity, lies with Mr Trimble. All his career he has played the role of hardliner, the risk-averse route to the top in Unionist politics, but now is the moment to take a risk for peace. Throughout the Unionist community in Northern Ireland, there is a desire that talks with Sinn Féin take place. A sea-change has occurred in the attitudes of a community accustomed to achieving its goals by boycott, abstention and obstruction. Mr Trimble's risk is that the change has not permeated so far through the ranks of his own party. But he has cleverly launched a consultation exercise beyond the ranks of his party which could cover his entry into talks.

We cannot know the precise nature of any settlement that may come out of such talks, although two elements are obvious. One is that Northern Ireland will remain part of the United Kingdom; the other is that it will have a special relationship with the Irish Republic. We do not know whether a

settlement could be hammered out by next May, the deadline Mr Blair has set for talks, but it is worth having such a deadline, and bearing in mind the prospect of Irish referendums at the end of the process.

No one suggests that next month's votes in Scotland and Wales are unimportant, but the process leading to a referendum on Northern Ireland is a matter of life and death. It is up to Mr Trimble to begin it.

Three wheels on my wagon ...

I'll Never Catch On, part 76. "Let's Ride," you can imagine American roadhogs exclaim as they leap into their Mustang, Bronco ... or Reliant Robin. Now the three-wheeler, butt of British humour since its launch in 1935, is poised for a US sales drive. Relunched as a battery-powered vehicle, its makers hope to flog it to environment-conscious Californians. (Green footnote: battery-powered cars are good for local smogs, but produce just as much greenhouse gas unless they are recharged with wind-turbine-generated electricity.) Los Angeles may be ready for many things, but we suspect that Reliant Robins are not about to hit the freeways in large numbers. Not unless they put tail-fins on.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Soviet-style 'boot camp' for priests

Sir: The description of the Stroud reformatory for Catholic priests as a "boot camp" is a rare flash of unguarded honesty from the Catholic Media Office – and is all the more welcome for that ("Gay priest reveals secret of Catholic 'boot camp'", 27 August).

Stroud's existence as a centre for therapy, however, is nothing to be proud of. What other institution would dump together men with addictive problems, frequently precipitated by loneliness, paedophiles, always in a class of their own in any setting; men who have abusive relationships with women; men suffering mental illness because they are required to believe that a deep, loving relationship with a woman is incompatible with their priesthood; and men with homosexual relationships, in name just some categories? How can it possibly claim any integrity? It is symptomatic of an ideology that knows it can cling on only by duress and resembles more something from the era of the Soviet Union than from the lifetime and ministry of Christ.

Many of these men are the final victims of a hierarchical system that insists on a model of priesthood – male and celibate – which no longer has any credibility except in its own eyes. The image of God which the Stroud regime suggests is horrific. One reason why many men refuse to put themselves forward for the priesthood is because, however strong their calling to ordained ministry, they do not believe that God requires them to distort their humanity in the way that has created so many profoundly unhappy men within the hierarchy then hides away.

Hiding its weaknesses, as it defines them, is a besetting sin of the institutional Catholic Church. As all the other Christian traditions tussle in the public eye with the issue of clergy who are actively gay, I wonder when the Catholic Church will admit that there is a flourishing gay culture among our own clergy – as any honest bishop would tell you.

Mrs JACKIE HAWKINS
Ruislip Manor, Middlesex

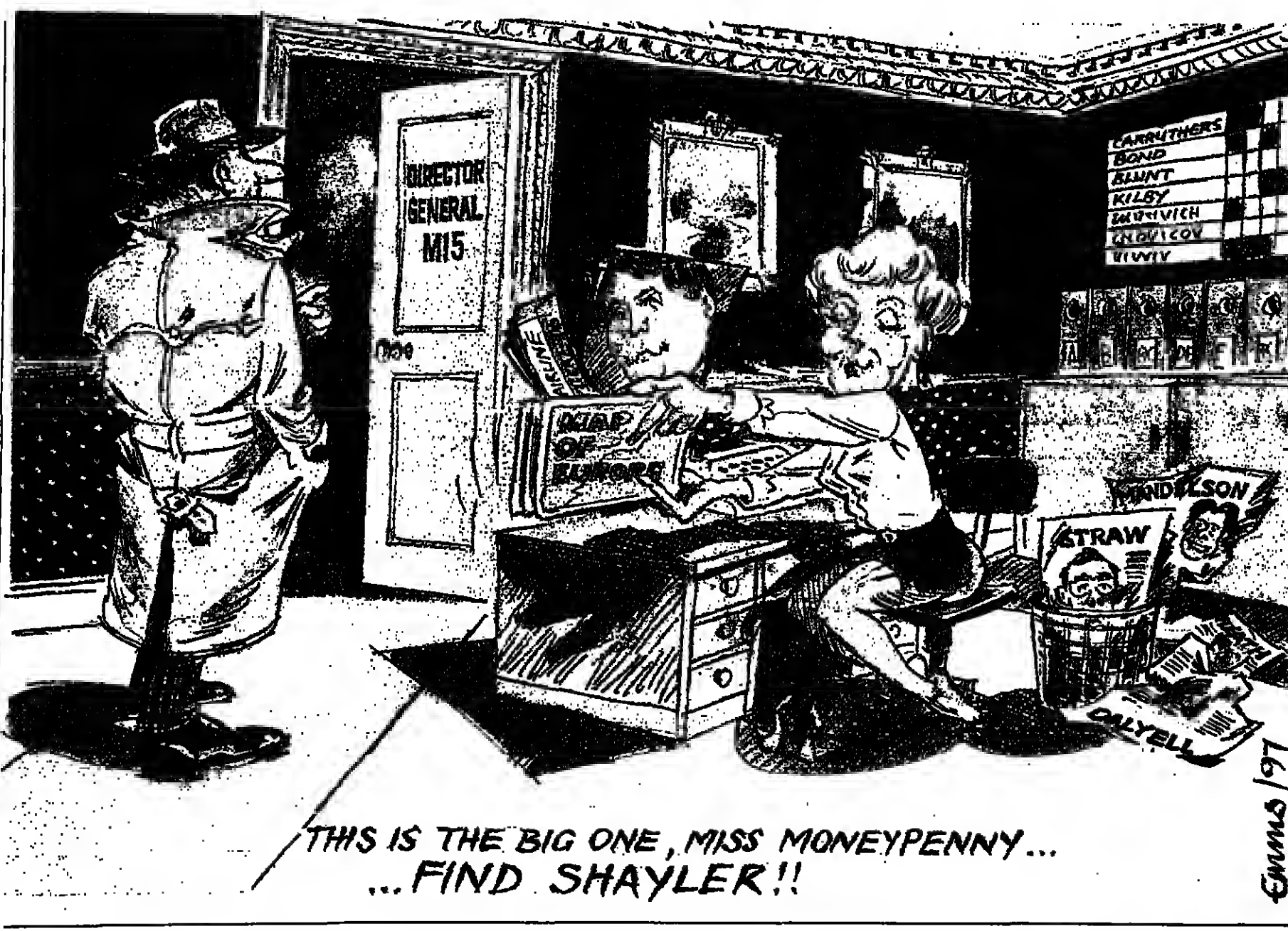
Sir: My experience of others revealing the secrets of the Roman Catholic "boot camp" at Stroud is that they are diligently sought out to account for their revelations. I hope your correspondent may evade detection.

Reports of child sex abuse by priests and religious have rightly rocked the Roman Church. Its past complicity caused much unnecessary suffering. The effect of so many stories breaking within a short period means that some priest friends of mine in Ireland no longer wear their dog collars. What was once a magic key to every heart has now become a barrier to verbal and sometimes physical abuse from a disillusioned people.

The Roman hierarchy is still in shock. It has developed a strategy of openness and candour that it hopes will restore the confidence of the people. At the sharp end of this policy is the priest who has "failed".

The Roman Church has yet to reach a balanced perspective on the whole matter of its sexually active clerics. The once over-protected priest has now become guilty on the slightest suggestion or gossip.

In some dioceses the "child protection teams" set up as a



reaction to the horror stories have acquired the status of the Holy Inquisition. They beg parishes to ship their priest – in report any and all sins. In one parish I know of where the gay priest was "suspected", the diocesan child protection team begged for information to damn the man. When they received none they blamed the people for their laxness.

The Roman Church was strong to hide its evil priests; it is doing a double injustice to its clergy now because it is so afraid. Fear has always been the enemy of truth. The Rev MARTIN REYNOLDS
Cardiff

Sir: I know two "graduates" of Stroud who were sent there because of their alcoholism; one still drinks, the other is possibly the gentlest, kindest person I know, who was genuinely reborn at Stroud over the months.

Stroud cannot be judged on the basis of one week's residence. My friend's eyes are alive and sparkling with a distinct absence of manic stare. But while defending the institution, I admit that one hears that there is a "class distinction" there between the drinkers and the men with an altar-boy problem.

This is born, I suspect, out of the homophobia which is still present in the attitudes of many in the church and which regards homosexuality and paedophilia as virtually synonymous.

Gay men should not be sent to Stroud. Equally, if they have been blessed with a vocation and ordained, they should ideally acknowledge their sexuality but also embrace celibacy.

PAUL SMITH
London N5

Sir: You publish an account by a priest of his week at Stroud, which rings true to what many know about it.

Unfortunately, along with his factual report he includes a rumour about two people I know well which is cruelly inaccurate: it is true that four years ago one of the resident priests committed suicide. The trigger was not an abortion, but the simple fact that his girlfriend lost their baby through "natural causes", exactly four years ago today.

In fact, "natural causes" hides the truth that this woman, who had to abandon her job and her home because of a difficult pregnancy, was strongly discouraged from seeing the baby's father. When she insisted, she found him reduced and broken, but was prevented from speaking to him alone. Soon after this, she lost the baby, and a week later she lost him.

The Rev JOHN KELLY
Aberdeen

Centuries old

Sir: Correspondence on past longevity (Letters, 22, 26 August) reminds me of an ancestor, Elizabeth Hobbs, who, as recorded on her tombstone at Little Wilbraham, near Cambridge, had lived in three centuries, the 17th, 18th and 19th, when she died in 1803 at the age of 104. What was a rare achievement 200 years ago will doubtless be celebrated by many on the turn of this century.

DAVID BUTLER
Oxford

Citizenship for our colonies

Sir: It is reported that the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary has ordered a review of Britain's relations with its colonies.

A measure that would restore confidence would be to give back to colonial citizens the parity of citizenship that as citizens of the UK and Colonies they formerly enjoyed with UK citizens.

The British Nationality Act (1981), which reclassified those of us connected with the UK as British citizens, created a new British Dependent Territories citizenship for colonials, which does not give a right of abode in Britain. This was entirely because of the perceived need to stop immigration from Hong Kong. The few thousand other remaining colonial citizens were not seen to present a problem.

Full British citizenship has since been accorded to Falkland Islanders. With Hong Kong no longer being a British colony – and yet another designation of British Nationality (Overseas) having been devised for its citizens who wish to retain a form of British nationality – there can be no rational impediment to giving full British citizenship to our few remaining colonials.

DEREK W. PARTRIDGE
London SE16

The writer was head of the treaty and nationality department in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office from 1984 to 1986.

Cruel to be 'kind' to cats

Sir: Your juxtaposition of cat-related photographs by Richard Billingham depicting dysfunctional family life in Britain ("Sun's stark portrait of a family at war", 25 August) vividly shows how this nation of alleged "animal lovers" often treats its pets.

One photo shows a cat in mid-air, presumably having been thrown across a room, while another shows the intimidating figure of Billingham's mother tenderly feeding a tiny kitten with a pipette.

Your article states: "the remaining impression is one of horror, squalor, but also occasional compassion". I assume this choice of photos was selected to portray this perception when, in fact, it illustrates exactly the opposite.

Last year the Cats Protection League rescued more than 67,000 homeless and abused cats and kittens – and it is certain that the vast majority of those started life like that kitten but ended up like that cat.

It is fortunate that these impressive photographs will go on public display at The Royal Academy on 18 September, right in the middle of our fifth National Cat Week (15-21 September). This unexpected but vivid portrayal of feline abuse is both timely and, unhappily, deadly accurate.

MIKE McCRAWLEY
Chief Executive
The Cats Protection League
Horsham, West Sussex

Kurdish peace train plea

Sir: As participants and supporters of the Musa Anter Peace Train initiative, we are deeply concerned by the statement by the Minister of the Interior of Germany that the train will be stopped at the Belgian border. This is a serious curtailment of the freedom of movement of citizens, enshrined in European Union law. More seriously, it obstructs efforts to secure a peaceful and just political solution in the Kurdish question in Turkey.

Germany's decision encourages the Turkish state to refuse any negotiations with Kurdish political parties. In the Kurds it sends the message that Turkey has powerful friends in Europe who are more concerned about military and commercial links with a Nato ally than peace. By halting the Musa Anter Peace Train, Germany is helping to prolong the suffering of the Kurdish people.

The UK government should pursue within the European Union both the matter of the infringement of the rights of its own citizens and the EU's failed policy of gently persuading Turkey to improve its human rights record.

ESTELLA SCHMID; FRANCES D'SOUZA, director, Article 19; CHRISTINE BLOWER, NUT President; DAVID MCDOWALL, Lord REA; Lord HYLTON; JOHN AUSTIN MP; CYNOG DAFIS MP; MICHAEL FEENEY, Refugee adviser to Cardinal Hume; TOM COX MP; RUDI VIS MP; JUDITH VIDAL HALL; Lord AVEBURY; HAROLD PINTER
London N4

Babies saved from rubella

Sir: Your article "The truth about the MMR, jab" (26 August) raises important concerns. Since the National Deafblind and Rubella Association, supports the need for further research. However, it should be emphasised that the rubella vaccine has been highly successful in reducing the incidence of rubella in pregnant women, and the consequent devastating effects on unborn children.

Between 1990 and 1995, fewer than 25 babies were born in the United Kingdom with congenital rubella syndrome (CRS). This contrasts with 360 between 1971 and 1975. Many of these children were born both deaf and blind, often with additional heart, brain and physical impairments, and facing enormous challenges in coming to terms with the world.

RODNEY CLARK
Chief Executive
Sense, the National Deafblind and Rubella Association
London N3

Military manners

Sir: It was inevitable that the Army would soften its treatment of recruits (report, 25 August), but it is sad that we may never hear again an angry sergeant abusing an awkward recruit with "Why did your mum have you? Was it just to annoy me?"

Mindless abuse to some, no doubt, but others may feel a tinge of sorrow at the passing of a tradition.

J K C HENDERSON
Fitcham, Surrey

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number. Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.

The Minister for Curing Illness by Inclusion

Britain has its first ever Minister for Public Health in Tessa Jowell, who is seeking to prevent illness by ending 'social exclusion'. Jeremy Laurance accompanied her to Birmingham where he found a few worthy projects in action and wondered if they could really be extended nationwide



Tessa Jowell with local GP Stephen Field on a visit to the Bellevue Medical Centre and its surrounding estate in Birmingham

Photograph: News Team

"Look at that," says Tessa Jowell, stopping dead in the street. The entourage of health authority officials, civil servants, doctors and health visitors following the Minister for Public Health stops too. Obsequiously, we scan the ground for used condoms, syringes or worse – evidence of last night's activity in this unsavoury corner of inner-city Birmingham. But Ms Jowell's gaze is raised to the tower block in front of us.

Its upper floors apparently abandoned, it rises behind another "blinded" three-storey building with doors and windows boarded up. It takes a second or two to follow the minister's gaze, and then we see it – a balcony, half-way up the tower, festooned with plant pots. Geraniums and spider plants in profusion indicate, not just a human presence, but a human imagination pitted against bleak reality.

"That shows the strength of the human spirit," observes Ms Jowell. There is a respectful pause, a murmur of assent, and then the entourage moves on.

This sort of thing impresses the natives. Ms Jowell is warm, committed and transparently sincere – and she charms everyone she meets. A health visitor whose project she has come to inspect is almost speechless with delight. A solemn GP expresses frank surprise at the seriousness with which his views are sought and, apparently, heard.

The minister is in Birmingham to

begin the process of putting flesh on the bones of the Government's pledge to tackle health inequalities. Last week, Peter Mandelson announced that he would be chairing a new cabinet committee set up to examine ways of overcoming social exclusion. Ms Jowell is already out gathering the material that will, in time, shape the new policy.

Labour urgently needs this material to prove that its pledge is more than just warm words. As the honeymoon with the electorate comes to an end, critics are questioning how much the Minister for Public Health, Britain's first, can achieve without a budget of her own.

When challenged on the lack of money, the minister's normally sweet demeanour acquires a steely edge. She brusquely dismisses any suggestion of a threat to her credibility. "We start by saying we are going to do it [tackle inequalities] and then we set about doing it. That is a defining aspect of this government. Today is about charting that journey. There are no short-term solutions. It will take a long time and require sustained and determined commitment."

So how is it to be done? The journey today begins in a leisure centre on the fringes of a deprived area of Birmingham where seriously overweight, unfit people who would never have contemplated visiting a gym are being enticed into twice-weekly sessions on an exercise bike by an innovative scheme known as "exercise on prescription". Instead of writing out prescriptions for drugs, local GPs can now prescribe a series of sessions at the centre, and patients get personal attention from trained experts who devise individual programmes to suit them.

Ms Jowell, wearing a powder blue shift dress, poses gamely for photographers astride an exercise bike, trying to preserve her dignity while chatting to Cath Hughes, a large, cheerful lady of 48 who has suffered from arthritis for 10 years, and Ann Clough, 52, who has reduced her weight from 17 stones to 11 stones since coming to the centre. Both are now enthusiastic and regular attenders. Ms Hughes said: "I had never been in a gym before. I hadn't the confidence. I thought you needed to get into a leotard first."

The minister was impressed. Here was an example of needy people being helped to use a normal public facility that they would never otherwise have visited. Overcoming social exclusion was not about providing some expensive, specialist facility which perpetuated the exclusion. Nor was it just about poverty. It was about helping the 30 per cent of people who felt excluded from society by creating routes back into the mainstream.

Outside the centre, she said: "These are women for whom exercise and getting into exercise kit are as alien as paragliding. They are people who are as unfit as it is possible to measure – who can't walk 50 yards on the flat without getting out of breath – and who, without help, will become chronically disabled in later life. The task for government is understanding how to clear the pathways that will take people into facilities that already exist."

"Creating routes into the mainstream" could become Tessa Jowell's mantra. She repeated the phrase several times during the day. It is also, helpfully, low cost. Spending should be required only at the margin, because all the facilities are already there.

All the Government's efforts, if you look at how they develop in practice, are about finding routes into the mainstream, she says.

The idea fits with the personality. Ms Jowell is a naturally inclusive politician. She has an uncanny knack of making whoever she is talking to feel that they are the only person in the world for her at that moment. It is a quality that can be misinterpreted, especially by men. She is a tactile (more than a tactile) politician, which is what makes her so effective on these walkabouts, greeting strangers with a squeeze of the arm, hugging former colleagues and listening with the practised care of a psychiatric social worker (she qualified as one in the early Seventies, and was later assistant director of the mental health charity Mind).

But she is also hard-working, determined and ambitious; and that gives her an edge that can surprise the unwary. The next stop on our tour is a meeting at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital

where a posse of the local great and good, including the Bishop of Birmingham, have turned out to present their plan for a £1m gymnasium for the hospital. They hope to win a lottery grant and run the gym as a commercial venture, open to the public, to defray the cost of providing it as a service to patients.

Ms Jowell is attentive throughout the presentation and asks polite questions afterwards. Most of those at the meeting appear to feel that their plans have been well received. Only those familiar with the minister's normal effusiveness will have suspected her of lacking enthusiasm. The drawback with the scheme, and its proponents are quite open about this, is that it is opportunistic – geared first to tapping into an available source of money and secondly to meet a perceived need, rather than the other way about.

The add test, in the minister's eyes, is that a project should be focused on assisting a specific group of the disadvantaged to gain some benefit in a way that reduces, rather than increases, their separateness from the rest of society. Merely opening the doors of a hospital fitness centre to the general public – which will attract the leotard already-fit because it is cheaper than the private gym down the road – is not the way to tackle social exclusion. It is the sort of woolly do-goodism that leaves Ms Jowell unimpressed.

The virtue of the hospital's scheme is that there is an identifiable source of money – the lottery – to pay for it. Ms Jowell displayed a curious lack of interest in the cost of the schemes she visited in Birmingham, not once asking how much money was involved or how it was raised. Yet officials privately conceded that in the case of the exercise-on-prescription project, which involved building an extension to the leisure centre eventually paid for by the health authority, there were fierce local battles about how the bill would be met. A second project – providing interpreters to work with Bangladeshi first-time mothers in a part of the city where the perinatal death rate is twice the national average – cost £80,000. The organiser of that scheme disclosed this only after the minister had left the room

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Exclusive! Diana tells all to the Hungarians

Miles Kington

As must be quite apparent by now, Princess Diana's scorn for the British press is equalled only by her respect for the foreign media, which treat her with the fair-mindedness she craves. She will not speak her mind to a Fleet Street man, but will open her heart to the man from Le Monde.

In fact, I might well never have secured the exclusive interview with her which follows, had I not taken the precaution of masquerading as a Hungarian journalist and requesting an interview on behalf of a Budapest broadsheet.

I do not in fact speak any Hungarian, but neither, I surmised, does the Princess. And after some time spent in the company of the late George Mikos, I felt I could assume a convincing Hungarian accent.

The interview took place in the fine furnishings department of Harrods, a large store in central London.

Your Highness, perhaps if you were to sit here on this sofa which is marked 'Now Only £1,770', and if I were to stand to attention beside you...

Oh, but that is not fair. You should not stand if I am sitting.

But you are royalty... You are Your Highness... I am only My Lowness.

Yes, I know, but I have always felt a special sympathy for those who were in a more difficult situation than myself, such as you. Victims of circumstances. People who, for no fault of their own, had to suffer. Why I should feel a special sympathy for the innocent victims of society's cruelty I have no idea, but there you are.

So it would make you feel a lot better if I were to sit down?

Oh, yes! I would feel a lot better! My tears would dry! My eyes would lose their photogenic moistness! I would force a smile to my lips! I would face the light to give maximum chance of a good exposure for any passing photographer!

I thought you hated passing photographers?

I do. But one must be ready at all times.

Good. Very well then. I will seat myself.

Where have you gone?

I am afraid we do not have sofas as rich and soft as this in my native Hungary. I have sunk out of sight down this end

Believe me, you should not ask for one. If you knew anything about land-mines, you would realise the damage caused world-wide is...

Yes, yes, but I do not think my readers in Hungary will be interested in land-mines. It is not one of our preoccupations.

What, then, would your readers in Hungary be interested in? Would they be interested in what I feel about the last government?

Well, we do not change governments very often in Hungary, and I am not sure how many people remember the last government.

No, no. I was talking about the last British government.

Oh no. I don't think we would be interested in that. However, if you wish to say something off the cuff that would be caught by the world's press agencies and flashed round the tabloids under the headline 'DI'S CLANGER', I am happy to oblige.

Very well. Here we go. As far as the previous government is concerned, I could not stand John Major. He talked incessantly about cricket as if it mattered.

Hmm... This might be difficult in Hungary, where we do not have cricket. Can I

make that water polo?

Polo is not my favourite game.

Water polo has nothing to do with horses. Your Highness. For water polo you do not stand around shivering on cold, windswept fields, making idle conversation to aristocratic oafs. You stand shoulder to shoulder with ecstatic crowds in warm, echoing swimming stadia, roaring your side on...

I do not think I would entirely enjoy that. It is not easy for someone like me to mingle easily with a crowd when one is, alas, so easily recognised.

No danger of that in Hungary, your ladyship. No one would have the faintest idea who you were.

Oh, I don't think I would like that very much... Dodi's a funny name. Pardon?

Dodi is a funny sort of name. Where does it come from?

Just a moment, what has happened to your Hungarian accent?

The full transcript of this interview, which lasted a little while longer, can be obtained from me, subject to normal rates.

سكنا من الامن

Unlock the secret services – the key is transparency

General Vernon Walters, the distinguished and polyglot American soldier diplomat whom George Bush made ambassador in Bonn, used to enjoy recounting the remark made to him at a Washington dinner by a senior Soviet armed forces figure accompanying Mikhail Gorbachev on his first visit to the US. "For 40 years," said the eminent Communist general, a World War II veteran, "I have been reading the KGB's top secret reports on your country. But I have learned so much more in the last 48 hours."

This story tells you more about détente than the quality of Soviet intelligence. It's nevertheless a graphic illustration of how the thawing of the Cold War transformed the role of the great intelligence services of East and West: how it changed the rules of the Great Game itself. Which was why in 1992 it was no longer remotely sensible, if it ever had been, for MI5 to be keeping live files on Peter Mandelson because he had once, in the early 1970s, been a member of the Young Communist League. Did it also, for example, keep files on Denis Healey, an ex-Chancellor and Defence Secretary, who had also never made a secret of his youthful membership of the Communist Party? It now looks a little more possible, in the wake of the scattergun, and in some cases rather vague, revelations by the ex-MI5 agent David Shayler, that we will find out. And it is altogether possible that the answer, representatively, will be yes.

But that isn't the main point. Shayler may be a rather flaky witness. He doesn't seem to be quite sure whether the main fault of his former employers was that they were too cautious or too cautious enough. But by telling us at least a few things we didn't know, he has dramatised the central problem of the intelligence agencies: their chronic lack of accountability to the taxpayers whose money keeps them in business and whom they are there to protect. And that problem becomes more, rather than less, acute now that the fall of the Berlin wall has made a lot of what the security services' paymasters are being protected from, if not less substantial, at least less obvious.

This isn't at all a case for abolishing the security services. MI6 has employed some outstandingly brave public servants, as different as it's possible to be from the gross, bibulous bully depicted in John Le Carré's latest novel *The Tailor of Panama*. And anyone who thinks that high quality, secretly acquired intelligence shouldn't have been deployed against the IRA is living in a sentimental dream world. Shayler's claim that MI5 could have somehow stopped IRA terrorism in its tracks if it had been less bureaucratic is easily the least convincing he has made; what evidence there is suggests that the security services – which have a record of sifting and analysing complex data which the police acknowledge they don't have – have been successful in Northern Ireland. Senior police officers also attest to some early successes for MI5, using the same skills, in its more recently conferred lead role against organised crime. Which suggests that Robin Cook may have been sensible yesterday to outlining an important role for MI6 in the war against international drug trafficking. State-



Donald Macintyre

How much of what MI5 and MI6 are doing shouldn't be done at all, or should be done by someone else?

things – like stealing other countries' negotiating briefs at international summits – to do now the Cold War is over? It is in no one's interest not to know the answers. And it simply isn't credible that the services could not do more to break their spending down publicly without compromising operational security.

As it happens the new government has taken the bold step – which rather surprisingly it has not yet announced – of submitting the intelligence services to one of the comprehensive spending reviews ordered by Gordon Brown and Alistair Darling. An interdepartmental committee is currently seeking to expose them to zero-based budgeting, a Treasury discipline which asks the department or agency concerned to explain from first principles the value of everything it does. But ministers will have to be tough; when an effort was made from within the Treasury to do the same thing in the 1980s, it foundered when the security services, almost certainly with Margaret Thatcher's backing, put the shutters up.

There is more: either the forthcoming Freedom of Information Bill, or forthcoming Data Protection Bill, or both, should afford a right, even if it hedged by optional security exemptions, to citizens to inspect their own files. And the parliamentary scrutiny committee, which reports directly to the Prime Minister, and seems to be able to uncover oodles of stuff, at least in public, should be given a much enhanced role, with the obligation to report to Parliament.

John Major's record on these issues is not discreditable. He made the services answer themselves. He set up some scrutiny, however rudimentary. Now the challenge for Labour is to give them at least the transparency that surrounds the CIA in the US. This is in the interests of the security services themselves. And the brightest and the best in MI5 and MI6 surely know that.

Slagging off the sexually voracious

by Suzanne Moore

We can all rest easy in our beds now that the advert which has drawn the most complaints this year – 309 – has been banned. A replacement advert, for low-calorie Lucozade, also features the "Fat Slags" cartoon characters, but it has been changed. Instead of saying "O mercy, it's the Fat Slags", it will now say "O mercy, it's Sandra and Tracey".

Does a slag by any other name smell as foul, I wonder? Does calling these characters Sandra and Tracey rehabilitate them into respectability? Is this not yet another significant victory for womanhood?

It is hard to know which word has caused the most offence – "fat", or "slag". Both words are used on television. The word "slag" features in many a line of soap opera dialogue. In *Coronation Street*, for example, a character says, "Who you calling a slag? You slag." But the use of the word in an advert is considered inappropriate for television advertising, according to the Independent Television Commission.

For those of you who don't know, the Fat Slags are a creation of the adult comic *Viz*. They are, in the prime description of the *Telegraph*, "large, lewd and under-dressed" – Sandra and Tracey are appetites on legs, in fact. They like sex, particularly in alleyways, and chips, cigarettes and alcohol. Their clothes are too tight, they decorate their legs with purple hosiery, they give up their babies for adoption rather than have a night in. I happen to think they are rather funny. Not everyone does. The Fat Slags embody, we are told, every cliché about women. They are a male invention that stereotypes women, that enables men to laugh at us. Anyway, you wouldn't want your children learning the word "slag" off the TV when they could be learning it at school now, would you?

Such an argument makes sense only if we acknowledge that once something appears on television it is given a level of societal approval. But, as always with this type of discussion, a dreadful literalism creeps in that is ignorant of context. The result is that we end up banning an ad with the word "slag" in it, but tolerate any number of ads which feature women as clueless but sexy bimbos who have nothing better to do all day than to go round stroking cars.

Give me Sandra and Tracey, then, the exhausted name of irony, using and abusing men any day, over the *Stepford* wives who become aroused at the sight of a set of car keys. Or the woman whose vile boyfriend enlists his horrible Renault Mégane in his campaign to sexually harass her.

Whatever one thinks of the Fat Slags, they wouldn't put up with such treatment, for they embody men's fear of women



A victory for women? The words 'Fat Slags' were replaced by Sandra and Tracey in the controversial Lucozade ad

Give me Sandra and Tracey any day over the model wives who get aroused by a set of car keys

more than anything else. They are primal beings who do not appear to attend seminars on what society thinks of sexually voracious women. Nor are they much concerned with being overweight. In this way they are liberating, just as Edina and Patsy were liberating in their drunken behaviour, just as Dawn French is when she dresses up as Pamela Anderson, just as the Spice Girls are when they go around pipping Prince Charles's bum and talking about snogging each other.

Open expressions of female appetite and female desire are still rather rare. Though bad culture may have prematurely climaxed, its influence is still everywhere. It has been used to legitimise the most appalling and deeply embedded sexism in the exhausted name of irony. However, bad culture does not exist in a vacuum. While the lads who have made soft porn acceptable are poring over yet more images of nude women, in the real world women are continuing to move on. The only women allowed to speak in the sad old fantasy world are the MAWs (Models/Actresses/Whatever), and then only about

their sex lives. The Fat Slags, on the other hand, hardly need to go to workshops in assertiveness training. They know what they want and they want it now.

The question, then, is whether or not such a joke rebounds on women. The answer is that, yes, sometimes it does – but not always. Is this enough reason to ban it? Personally, I think that it would help to stop 14-year-old boys using the word "slag" of girls who won't sleep with them, then I would happily ban the ad and the cartoon strip tomorrow. But we all know that it isn't that easy. Despite the overt sexualisation of our culture, we are increasingly confused about what is acceptable and what isn't. At the heart of this confusion is the way that we pay more attention to language than we do to who is speaking. Some people are disgusted that women can now declare themselves bitches (as in Meredith Brooks' "I'm a bitch/I'm a lover/I'm a child/I'm a mother," which my six-year-old happily sings along to). When, they ask, did this become acceptable? Don't they realise that this is yet another little ditty for

women who juggle their lives?

Have they failed to notice the conscious effort over the last 20 years that feminists have made to appropriate many negative words about themselves? In the Seventies, Erin Pizzey was happy to describe herself as a "slut". She was reacting to the Superwoman trend by refusing to get obsessed by housework. Indeed, words such as "nigger", "faggot" and "queer" have been similarly reclaimed, which goes to show that there is a world of difference between being the object of an insult, and a speaking and self-defining subject.

The worst excess of laddishness is not that it reduces women to stereotypes – these stereotypes have always existed anyway – it is the way it deliberately silences women and reduces them to a mute fantasy, whether this be lap-top porn on the Net or supposedly unparliamentary lap-dancing. Laddishness is actually fairly impotent in the

face of sexually active, articulate, achieving women, for it exists primarily as a defensive strategy, a denial of fundamental changes in our society. One of the ways women are silenced, of course, is by being told that they take everything far too seriously, that it's only a laugh.

The riposte to this is not to laugh louder than any man alight another dull piece of sexism, but to insist that other kinds of images, other kinds of voices, also appear. The Fat Slags (who, let's not forget, are cartoon characters, just as Jessica Rabbit is a cartoon character) may not be your role models but at least they speak up for themselves. Calling them Sandra and Tracey will hardly destroy their *joie de vivre*, because they do not think there is anything wrong in women being promiscuous. The slags themselves are remarkably happy with their lifestyle. The only way to make "slag" less offensive is to remove its connotation that female sexuality is a bad thing. Rather than banning the word we need to change the attitude. You certainly don't need to be fat or female to be called a slag these days. For surely, lads, isn't that what equal opportunities are all about?

Farewell Britain, hello the Great Wen

They play classical music over the loudspeaker at the railway station at Cambridge. Elsewhere it might seem twee, but there it feels rather appropriate. That kind of thing can, however, lead to delusion. I boarded one of the sleek new diesels which take you straight from the university city to Kings Cross in only an hour. There was a high-pitched, shimmering hum, like the opening bars of Vaughan Williams's *Rhapsody on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*. It was a good few moments before I realised it was merely the sound of the train readying itself for departure. Flooded by a wave of foolishness, I reflected that I should have known better. I was heading back to London and what passes for the real world.

As the flat Cambridgeshire landscape, gradually became more rolling, an indefinable feeling of sadness grew. I had covered a lot of ground since I had set out on my tour of the whole island of Great Britain, in a kind of sound-bite extravaganza of the journey of prototype tourists such as Daniel Defoe. Daniel Defoe, whose mission had included a brief to bribe Scottish parliamentarians to vote for union, my objective had been altogether more vague: to discover whether there was any longer any such thing as "community" in this nation, and if so, what nurtured it.

I realised on this final leg that I had been doing something else, too. I had unconsciously set out to accumulate the positive, not merely to report what goes unreported but to celebrate what is good in modern Britain.

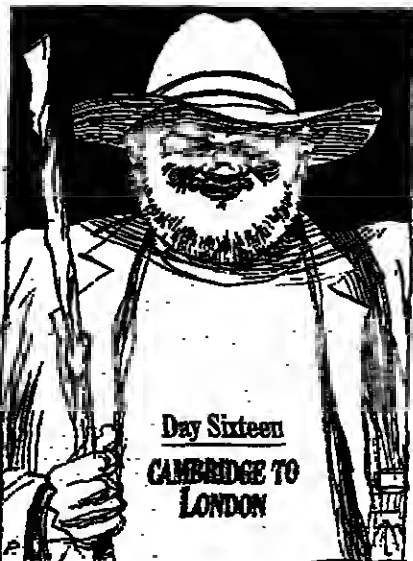
It has been a salutary experience to remove my metropolitan spectacles and come nose to nose with other people's realities. It has been

droll, as when at Belfast Harbour airport, waiting for the prop-driven bucking bronco of a plane to Edinburgh, I sat and watched a seductive promotional video of castles, sunlit Victorian public buildings and river buses, only to discover that it ended with the words "Destination Birmingham". It has been melancholic, as when passing through Barmley town centre to discover that all the life is being sucked out of the little place by the out-of-town mega-shopping complex at Meadowhall near Sheffield.

But above all it has been a journey of refreshment, which began the moment I stepped off the train in Cornwall to be greeted by a local Cornish not simply with a "Good morning", to which I replied, but with a follow-up inquiry: "You all right then?" It may only have been a conversational formula. Yet that second phrase was my first reminder of a world in which people have a little more time for one another. It is there all around the country. Even in a blurt, brisk city like Leeds, I was struck by how, as I stood peering owlishly at the destination board, a railwayman approached and offered help, unsolicited.

It has been a long journey. Even in a little country such as the UK, everywhere is further than at first you think. And travel writers ever seem to carry luggage – or at least, they rarely mention it. It had loomed large in my decision-making, especially since, whatever Mo Mowman may say, Railtrack at any rate was displaying little faith in the reliability of the IRA ceasefire: left luggage lockers remained out of service everywhere, even in Scotland and Wales, where Celtic communalism has so far protected the population from any terrorist outrage.

A JOURNEY AROUND THE WHOLE ISLAND OF GREAT BRITAIN



WITH PAUL VALLEY

The one journey which is always shorter than you expect is the final leg home. On the seat opposite was a newspaper. I picked it up: it was the first national paper I had looked at for weeks. On the journey out of London, the papers had been full of the shooting of Gianni Versace, yet when I disembarked in Cornwall the headline in the *Western Morning News* read "New water bills shock for West".

I had made it a particular rule not to read papers, or anything else, while travelling. Instead I looked either out of the window or at the people around. I followed the same rule in restaurants.

It is not just that you stumble across some marvellous vignettes this way, such as the family of four who ate a three-course dinner in total silence save for the bleeping of the youngest's Tamagotchi. It is not just that you realise that, regrettably, most of our fellow citizens live in a newsless world.

No, if you read when travelling you constantly find that you look up and realise that you have missed something. Travelling in 1478, William of Worcester recorded a plague of rabbits between Saffron Walden and Harlow; in 1997 I oodled over, across the Galloway peninsula, which those with noses in books failed to see. Reading on a journey turns a seamless progress into a series of disjointed fragments. It feeds our modern sense of dislocation. We do not live in the present, but always in the future or the past. Instead of rejoicing at where we are, we are ever on the way to somewhere else.

It happened to me now. I put down the paper and looked out of the window to find that I had missed the transition from countryside to suburb

to town. All at once we were on the edges of London, and the view was – as it is with so many places from our railway system – of the unprepossessing backside of its buildings.

It would not do to get too romantic about this. For the traveller there is the danger that you remain the perpetual spectator, over-involved, rather than the participant. You are upon the place you have arrived in, rather like the Wild Bill Hickok character, a long-haired ex-bloppy from Seattle, whom I met in The Crown in Belfast. He was obsessed with how to get bold of a gun. But there is one place where you find it harder to indulge your fantasies, and that is home.

The Great Wen, that other traveller, William Cobbett, called London. A wen, according to the *OED*, is "a sebaceous cystic tumour under the skin, occurring chiefly on the head". But as I arrived it seemed to me to be a great maw, a voracious gullet set on reclaiming me. As the familiar sights of the city appeared it felt as if they had chosen me, rather than me them.

"Cootemplate yourself as in a glass," said the 12th-century Benedictine monk William of Malmesbury, one of the earliest chroniclers of a journey round these isles. Perhaps, in the end, the journey tells you more about yourself than the places you see.

I queued for a Tube ticket. At the machine in front a young woman dithered and became bothered. "What are you looking for? Can I help?" I heard myself saying. Behind me the rest of the queue began tutting and hissing with impatience. Welcome back to London, I thought. Welcome home.

Tuesday: A conclusion.

Shane Warne

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Double blow for the City as one bank acts over unauthorised trading while another is handed a record penalty by the SFA

Rogue trader sacked at Crédit Suisse

Nic Cicutti
Personal Finance Editor

Credit Suisse, one of the world's largest banks, has sacked one of its traders for allegedly amassing hundreds of millions of pounds worth of unauthorised positions in the options market. The bank moved to dismiss Philip Penner, who is believed to have been working for its client management department, after he confessed to the trades earlier this month.

An internal investigation is now under way to discover how Mr Penner could have taken the positions on options without the full authorisation of his employer.

The Securities and Futures Authority, the top City regulator, has been informed of his dismissal. A regulatory source said yesterday: "I can confirm that we have received a report that he was dismissed for not rectifying his position. His registration [with the SFA] has been suspended as a result."

The alleged unauthorised trading at Credit Suisse follows a series of high profile scandals, that include the rogue trading by Nick Leeson which led to the collapse of Barings and by Peter Young, a fund manager at Morgan Grenfell, part of Deutsche Bank. Mr Young set up a series of dummy companies in 1995 and 1996 to con-

ceal his activities, which eventually cost Deutsche up to £400m.

In 1995, Barings, one of the UK's oldest merchant banks, collapsed after it admitted losses of up to £800m caused by Leeson, who is currently serving a six-year jail sentence in Singapore.

It is believed Credit Suisse managed to contain the losses to less than £10m by liquidating the positions immediately after Mr Penner admitted his unauthorised activities to senior staff.

A spokeswoman at the bank said: "[Mr Penner] has left the firm. The situation is that this has been brought to the attention of the regulator. We believe that he is currently being investigated." She declined to say in which area of Credit Suisse's operations Mr Penner worked or how long he had been there, and would not elaborate on the precise nature of his unauthorised activities.

Sources said yesterday that Mr Penner had been authorised to take a position of up to £40m in FT-SE options. However, he was subsequently told to liquidate them.

But apparently unbeknown to the bank, Mr Penner did not adhere to the liquidation instruction and allegedly continued to extend his positions - betting on future stock market movements - to the extent that by the time he owned up, the bank's exposure ran to hundreds of millions of pounds.

The Credit Suisse spokeswoman refused to comment on suggestions that the extent of the bank's exposure ran to at least £400m or that the unauthorised trading took place while Mr Penner was officially on holiday last month. Mr Penner could not be contacted for comment.

Richard Farrant, chief executive at the SFA, said: "[Credit Suisse] appear to have operated very efficiently in this instance and have acted with prompt dispatch." He confirmed that an initial report on the bank's immediate steps had been sent to the regulator and that the SFA was waiting for a second report into how the unauthorised trades could have taken place.

Credit Suisse is one of the leading financial services groups in the world, employing more than 10,000 staff in 30 countries. The organisation, with headquarters in Zurich, is capitalised at more than \$7.2bn (£5bn).

The company is split into four main business units, including worldwide private banking, corporate and investment banking as Credit Suisse First Boston, asset management for institutions and a division catering for Swiss corporate and individual customers.

In 1996, a Credit Suisse bond salesman, David Santangelo who concealed a loss believed to be around \$6m (£4m) from a client was fined £25,000 by the SFA.

SBC fined £300,000 over Chinese Wall lapse

Nigel Cope
City Correspondent

Swiss Bank Corporation was yesterday subjected to the largest ever fine imposed by the Securities and Futures Authority as the regulator concluded two disciplinary cases against the bank.

Swiss Bank was "severely reprimanded" and fined £300,000 for failing to follow and implement its Chinese Wall procedures during 1994 when its market makers bought more than 8 per cent of the share capital of Yorkshire Electricity.

The SFA said the bank had "failed to observe high standards of market conduct" and had "failed fully to implement, monitor and control its Chinese Wall procedures" or to operate well-defined compliance

and supervisory procedures. In addition to the fine the bank was ordered to pay £121,095 towards the SFA's costs.

In the second case, SBC was ordered to pay £180,000 for its actions relating to the liquidation of the Kleinwort Benson European Privatisation Trust (Keptit) in 1996. It was also ordered to pay costs of £55,000.

Commenting on the two cases, Richard Farrant, the SFA's chief executive, said: "Managing and controlling the different parts of an integrated investment house in order to ensure fair treatment of clients and other market participants is challenging. SBC failed that test."

Mr Farrant took the opportunity to issue a warning to other firms saying that "the SFA will persistently pursue and judge harshly cases

where the needs of the market or the interests of clients are subordinated to the interests of the firm, even if this is not intended."

SBC recognised the severity of the fines and said it was committed to keeping its administrative processes under constant review. It does not plan to take any disciplinary action against any individuals as a result of the Yorkshire Electricity case as the SFA said in its report that the bank's employees had acted in good faith and had not wilfully breached the SFA's principles.

However, the bank has taken disciplinary action against several members of staff over the Keptit affair. The SFA's action over Yorkshire Electricity relates to SBC's conduct between August and December 1994. At that time the bank's corporate fi-

nance department was marketing cash performance notes to corporate clients as a means of providing cover for the costs of bid situations. A cash performance note is an instrument which tracks the market price of a security.

Though a client had told SBC it was interested in making a bid for Yorkshire, the bank failed to restrain its market makers from acquiring a stake of 8.2 per cent in the company, more than double the level required for hedging purposes.

SBC was acting as financial adviser to Trafalgar House in its £1.2bn bid for Northern Electric, which together with a tax price control announcement by the electricity regulator, had caused share prices to soar across the sector.

SBC acknowledged that it failed to operate well-defined compliance and supervisory procedures. In the event, SBC's client did not mount a bid for Yorkshire, though it was eventually taken over earlier this year by a joint US bid.

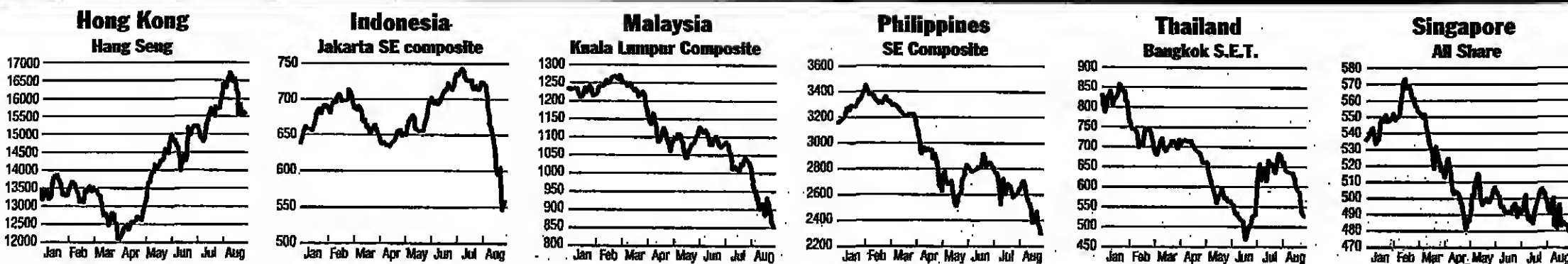
In the Keptit case, SBC's bid for the investment trust portfolio was accepted by Keptit's fund manager but in the time between the acceptance and the agreed time at which the strike price would be set, SBC's heavy selling in the market forced prices down, to the disadvantage of its client.

In its settlement with the SFA, Swiss Bank acknowledged that it "failed to act with skill, care and diligence and to ensure fair treatment to its client." SBC referred to the action as "an isolated incident".

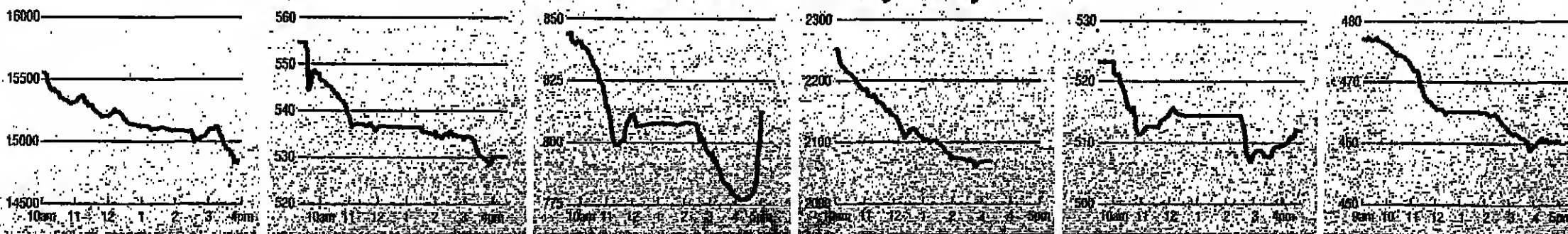
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Dow Jones and Footsie slide amid worries over US outlook □ Flood of sell orders causes Asian markets to tumble

Day of turmoil in Asian stock markets



Movements in the indices yesterday



Nerves prompt falls in London and New York

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

Share prices fell sharply in London and New York yesterday due to a fresh bout of nerves about the outlook for the US economy and company profits.

New figures for growth in the second quarter of the year showed that America's GDP expanded far more than first estimated. Although there was still no sign of inflation, the financial markets saw the figures increasing pressure on the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates later this year.

The FTSE 100 index ended nearly 63 points lower at 4,845.4 yesterday. On Wall Street, falls in technology stocks such as IBM and Altria took the Dow Jones index down more than 123 points to 7,663.77 by mid-morning, although it later recovered.

The jitters in the US and Europe followed earlier plunges in Asian stock markets.

According to new figures, US gross domestic product increased at an annual rate of

3.6 per cent in the second quarter of this year, much higher than the initial estimate of 2.2 per cent.

Higher exports and faster stockbuilding accounted for most of the revision, but the estimates for the rise in consumer spending were upgraded too.

The new figures mean that the US economy has grown at an average rate of 4.3 per cent since late last year - well above what economists would see as the trigger-point for eventual increases in inflation.

But the GDP deflator, the widest measure of prices, showed inflation at only 1.5 per cent in the year to June.

Brian Fabbri, chief economist at Paribas in New York, said: "There is strong growth, great profitability and no inflation. What more could anybody want?"

But he warned: "The Fed must be aware that the economy is simply booming."

Many analysts expect US interest rates to rise later this year in order to return growth to a sustainable pace, with November seen as the most

likely month for the move. Although stockbuilding is likely to fall back significantly in the current quarter, underlying demand, powered by consumer spending, is expected to pick up still further.

Christopher Low, of HSBC Markets in New York, said: "There is ample reason to worry about the momentum of growth."

Bijal Shah, a strategist at Merrill Lynch, said: "The US stock market is very highly valued and can only sustain this if profits continue to grow rapidly. But nobody knows exactly when the Fed will be forced to react by raising interest rates."

He said that when Wall Street finally saw a significant drop in share prices this could launch a downward spiral as the huge gains in the stock market had made a big contribution to the buoyancy of the US economy.

The spread of stock options as a part of pay packages meant high share prices had played a big part in bolstering consumer spending.

Market report, page 19

Malaysian sell-off sparks further round of turmoil in the Far East

Stephen Vines
Hong Kong

East Asian stock markets trembled yesterday as sell orders poured into dealing rooms, sending the markets into a tailspin. One market after another succumbed to a bout of nerves.

"The entire region has been sold off," said James Osborn, director of sales at ING Barings Securities in Hong Kong.

Brokers struggled to pinpoint the catalyst for the turmoil, although most believed that the carnage started in Malaysia, where the KLSE Composite Index recorded its biggest fall of the year - plunging by more than 10 per cent at one stage before closing some 4 per cent down.

Meanwhile, the local currency plunged to a new low against the US dollar as fears over the burgeoning current account deficit undermined confidence.

The Malaysian sell-off was triggered by the authority's rather heavy-handed attempt to curb short selling. Traders were alarmed by a sudden change in the rules which demanded cash

up front for share purchases and the need to deliver scrip before selling.

Had market conditions been more stable, the response to a sudden change in trading rules might have been less extreme but Malaysia's stock and currency markets have been in a bearish mood and required only the smallest excuse to plunge into gloom.

As news of the Malaysian sell-off flashed across the screens in Asian dealing rooms, traders began to fear that the whole region would follow suit. It turned out to be a self-fulfilling prophecy, underpinned by genuine reasons for disquiet.

These were most visible in the Philippines, where the release of poor economic growth figures and worries about the local currency prompted investors to knock more than 9 per cent off the value of shares in Manila, the biggest single-day fall in 10 years.

In Indonesia, where the government had been congratulating itself on fighting off speculation against the local currency, the price of the fight was being calculated, leading to

fears that the increase in interest rates would take a heavy toll on banking and finance companies. Heavy share selling in this sector caused the market to slump by almost 5 per cent.

And in Hong Kong, which had been buoyed by the previous day by a successful land auction, the stock market had its second busiest day, leaving the blue chip Hang Seng Index more than 4 per cent down. The 65th point fall in the index was the fifth biggest on record, although in percentage terms it was overshadowed by the big plunges of the 1970s and 1980s.

Ironically Hong Kong seemed to be the victim of its success as a highly liquid market. Fund managers turned to their stock holdings in the territory to provide cash for redeeming positions in other markets.

There was also uncertainty over government measures to curb property prices. This uncertainty has cast a long shadow over the market, helping to fuel the 11 per cent decline in share prices recorded over the past three weeks.

Meanwhile the Singapore market fell 3.6 per cent, taking

it to a four-year low. Thailand topped 10 days of losses with yet another fall, dragging the market down by 2.3 per cent as the local currency fell to yet another low against the US dollar.

At the beginning of the week Asian governments were trying to talk up the markets by boasting that they had seen off the big institutional investors who were allegedly speculating against their currencies. However investors failed to be impressed, leaving market makers to reassess their views of how far Asian markets might fall.

Even the relative strength of Wall Street has done little to improve sentiment. US-based finance house Goldman Sachs added to the depressed mood yesterday when it issued new forecasts, downgrading growth estimates for key east Asian economies.

Bargains are beginning to emerge in these markets, but investors are wondering whether it might be better to wait for a real fire sale.

Guinness deal faces big EC objections

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Guinness and Grand Metropolitan are to defend their £24bn drinks merger before the European Commission at a crunch meeting next week after officials yesterday confirmed that there were serious objections to the deal on competition grounds.

The statement of objections from the competition commissioner, Karel van Miert, was received by the companies a few days ago. It is understood to confirm concerns raised by the EC in June over the combined group's dominance in European spirits markets.

The companies will attend oral hearings with the EC next Thursday and Friday, where they are unlikely to offer immediate concessions. The Commission has until 27 October to complete the investigation and announce any conditions for approving the merger. Guinness yesterday declined to comment on the discussions. "It's a confidential process," said a spokesman.

The EC is worried that GrandMet and Guinness, the second and third largest suppliers of spirits in the European Union, would be able to manipulate prices in some of the biggest national markets. It would give the merged company, to be renamed GMB Brands, more than a 40 per cent share of the Scotch whisky market in several EU countries.

Another concern is that GMB Brands would have vastly increased bargaining power with big retailers because of its huge list of famous name brands. The EC probe is one of several facing the two companies, who must also overcome the opposition of Bernard Arnault, the outspoken head of LVMH, the French luxury goods group and major shareholder in both Guinness and GrandMet.

Canadian spirits giant Seagram, has already launched a strong attack on the deal, which is also being investigated by the US watchdog, the Federal Trade Commission.

STOCK MARKETS									
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1994/97 High	1996/97 Low	YTD (%)	1994/97 High	1996/97 Low	YTD (%)
FTSE 100	4845.40	-61.50	-1.3	5086.80	4056.60	3.41	5086.80	4056.60	3.41
FTSE 250	4621.40	-28.20	-0.6	4729.40	4396.20	3.59	4729.40	4396.20	3.59
FTSE 350	2340.50	-26.70	-1.1	2438.00	2017.90	3.45	2438.00	2017.90	3.45
FTSE SmallCap	2247.76	-4.99	-0.2	2374.20	2178.29	3.19	2374.20	2178.29	3.19
FTSE All-Share	2288.59	-24.73	-1.1	2376.39	1989.78	3.43	2376.39	1989.78	3.43
New York	7684.50	-102.43	-1.3	8259.31	5932.94	1.66	8259.31	5932.94	1.66
Tokyo	16451.45	+9.61	+0.1	20881.07	17303.85	0.841	20881.07	17303.85	0.841
Hong Kong	14678.10	-657.85	-4.2	16673.27	12055.17	2.857	16673.27	12055.17	2.857
Frankfurt	3973.65	-22.01	-0.6	4438.93	2848.77	1.391	4438.93	2848.77	1.391

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES									
Short sterling					UK medium gilt				
Index	1 Month	1 Year	3 Month	6 Month	Index	1 Month	1 Year	3 Month	6 Month
UK	7.09	7.62	7.07	7.88	7.10	8.00	7.09	7.62	7.07
US	5.59	5.59	6.33	6.75	6.61	6.97	5.59	5.59	6.33
Japan	0.99	0.99	2.02	3.02	3.02	3.02	0.99	0.99	2.02
Germany	3.16	3.69	5.67	6.37	6.37	6.37	3.16	3.69	5.67

CURRENCIES									
\$/£				\$/DM				\$/¥	
1.64	1.63	1.62	1.61	2.96	2.95	2.94	2.93	165	164
1.60	1.59	1.58	1.57	2.92	2.91	2.90	2.89	163	162
1.56	1.55	1.54	1.53	2.88	2.87	2.86	2.85	161	160
1.52	1.51	1.50	1.49	2.82	2.81	2.80	2.79	159	158
1.48	1.47	1.46	1.45	2.78	2.77	2.76	2.75	157	156
1.44	1.43	1.42	1.41	2.72	2.71	2.70	2.69	155	154
1.40	1.39	1.38	1.37	2.68	2.67	2.66	2.65	153	152
1.36	1.35	1.34	1.33	2.62	2.61	2.60	2.59	151	150
F M T W T F				F M T W T F				F M T W T F	
Pound									
Yesterday				Change		Year Ago			
\$ (London)				1.6151		+0.0002 1.5693			
£ (New York)				1.6140		+0.0102 1.5565			
DM (London)				2.8014		-1.5601 2.3015			
¥ (London)				181.365		-20.14 168.036			
E Index				101.5		-0.4 95.0			
Dollar									
Yesterday				Change		Year Ago			
£ (London)				0.6192		-0.14 0.6413			
£ (New York)				0.6196		-0.04 0.6410			
DM (London)				1.7364		-1.4001 1.4790			
¥ (London)				118.485		-20.37 108.402			
E Index				105.2		-0.5 95.0			
OTHER INDICATORS									
Yesterday				Day's High		Year Ago			
Oil Brent \$				18.28		+0.11 20.27			
Gold \$				325.59		+0.08 308.50			
Gold ¥				201.57		+0.02 249.15			
Index				157.5		+3.300 152.4			
GDP				112.3		+3.400 108.1			
Base Rates				7 00p		- 5 75			

Generous Reckitt looks good value

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

Perhaps the City expects too much of Reckitt & Colman. Leaving aside those left at home to wield the feather duster, the household products and foods company is undervalued. Where is the growth in carpet cleaners, disinfectant and air fresheners, investors ask?

Hopes that Unilever or Procter & Gamble will bid for the group has put zip into the share price recently. Since Unilever said in February that it was selling its chemicals division to focus on household and healthcare, Reckitt's share price has taken off, beating the FTSE by almost 20 per cent. Yesterday's 20.5p slump in the shares to 96.1p was partly a correction after Vernon Sankey, chief executive, dismissed takeover rumours at the group's interim results.

Bid froth apart, Reckitt has been an unrelenting investment. Since 1993 and before the Unilever excitement, shares in the company underperformed the market by a sorry 22 per cent.

But perhaps the sceptics need to rethink. Reckitt's half-year results to July looked good against its peers. The 5.5 per cent underlying sales growth, excluding the currency hit, looks paltry, but household products and foods are both mature. Nestlé has repeatedly failed to meet its 5 per cent sales growth target and Unilever has struggled to produce similar growth.

Reckitt's strategy of avoiding commodity markets like detergents, while directing marketing and research muscle into developing niche brands is right. Some 70 per cent of the group's products are number one or two brands.

Sharing product technology between countries has been another success. Buying L&F in the US in 1995 has enabled Reckitt to spread the Lysol faith to faster growing countries like India, Australia's strength in pest control has been successfully exported to South Africa and Sri Lanka. And it is not surprising that Mr Sankey wants to keep the health products business. As well as being Reckitt's fastest growing division, technology from products like Dettol are being used to develop even better surface cleaners.

There are black spots. Currency aside, growth in Thailand and Malaysia is slowing. Brazil, half of the group's Latin American sales, is worryingly weak as retailers default. All this is bad news given the maturity of Europe and the importance of emerging markets for Reckitt's growth. The group's far-flung exposure to unpredictable economies has always been a concern. But given the potential for growth from emerging markets, Reckitt would be wrong to play safe.

Broker SBC Warburg is forecasting

full-year profits of £310m for 1997-1998 and £337m next year. Though a forward PE ratio of 19 is fair enough now, Reckitt looks good value longer term given its generous policy on cash handouts and fading bid prospects.

Slough waits on developments

Slough Estates, Britain's biggest industrial landlord, went through a fallow patch in the mid-1990s, but since the beginning of last year the shares have taken off, outperforming the rest of the stock market by 15 per cent. Part of this re-rating reflects a new dynamism evident at Slough since Sir Nigel Mobbs, veteran chairman of the group, relinquished some of his management responsibilities to Derek Wilson, who moved up from being managing director to chief executive early last year.

Some 18 months on, the group is in the midst of the biggest development programme in its history, with around 2 million sq ft of new space under construction or due to be started in Britain

alone this year. This big expansion comes at a propitious moment for the group. Helped by gains on the sale of a portfolio earlier this year and lower interest charges as a result of disposals, pre-tax profits jumped from £37.4m to £50.5m in the six months to June. Gearing of 53 per cent and uncommitted facilities of £300m leave plenty of financial leeway.

More importantly, the developments come after five years which have seen precious little new industrial property being built in the aftermath of the recession. The resulting pent-up demand is clearly becoming evident. Slough's estate is in effect fully let, with occupancy up from 94 to just under 97 per cent in the first six months of the year, while the group is seeing rent rises for good properties in good locations in the South-east of England.

That is just as well, as around two-thirds of the portfolio is based in the prospering M4 corridor of the Thames Valley. If market forecasts are borne out, the firmness of the retail market should soon start to feed through to industrial property.

That should make Slough a good later cycle play on the property market, with a useful exposure to the re-

tail sector, set to rise from 17 per cent last year to more than 20 per cent of the portfolio when the 600,000 sq ft Buchanan Galleries in Glasgow opens in the spring of 1999.

Brokers' estimates suggest net assets per share have grown from 285p to 299p over the past six months and could be 330p by this time next year. That suggests the shares, down 2p at 320p, are fairly rated.

T&N gets the better of ghosts

Not so long ago, T&N could never be mentioned without the dreaded word "asbestos" being muttered in the same breath. As Turner & Newall, it used to produce tons of the stuff, only to be sued decades later by asbestosis sufferers on both sides of the Atlantic.

Then last year it came up with a clever ruse to cap its liabilities at £1.2bn by taking out a £500m insurance policy.

But just as it laid one ghost to rest, others began to appear. Analysts pointed to an apparent slowdown in its car parts business and falling margins due to an indifferent world-wide car market.

They also argued that, like the rest of the engineering sector, T&N's exports would be hit by the rising pound. To cap it all, the asbestos claims came back to haunt T&N in June when a US judge threw out a class settlement, which opened the door to the possibility, albeit a small one, of higher payouts to sufferers.

Yesterday's results for the six months to June did much to dispel these fears. Underlying operating profits were flat at £85m, despite City expectations that they would fall to around £75m.

A combination of cost-cutting and reducing stocks helped push margins up 1 percentage point to 10.6 per cent, leaving plenty of scope for further improvement. And T&N should be able to continue to gradually increase volumes and prices by picking up market share.

The good figures pushed T&N's shares up 16p to 163.5p. Even so, they remain cheap on fundamentals and bidders are still likely to be circling the group as the industry continues to consolidate.

Pamure Gordon has upped its underlying current year profit forecast from £137m to £154.6m, putting the shares on a prospective price/earnings ratio of under 9. Good value.

Ladbroke to speed up hotel openings with help of HHC

Andrew Yates

Ladbroke yesterday announced its intention to rapidly expand its hotel chain by stepping up its alliance with Hilton Hotel Corporation (HHC), the US hotel giant, and unveiling plans to speed up its hotel opening programme.

The company is looking to take over up to 200 hotels around the world if HHC is successful in its \$11.5bn (£7bn) hostile bid for ITT, which runs the Sheraton hotel chain.

Peter George, chief executive of Ladbroke, said: "There will be opportunities for us as a result of the ITT deal. Hilton has no particular ambitions overseas and I hope we can do something together." Ladbroke would probably turn the Sheraton sites into Hilton hotels. It is also likely to take control of ITT's luxury Ciga chain, formerly owned by the Aga Khan.

Ladbroke is also looking to develop HHC's Conrad chain of hotels outside the US.

However, Ladbroke ruled out a full merger with HHC in the near future. "We discussed a full merger with HHC before agreeing to form a marketing alliance. There were various problems such as taxation, regulation and valuations in the UK and US which ruled out the possibility. As things stand we will not consider a full merger."

HHC is taking legal action to block ITT from selling off most of its assets in a desperate attempt to scupper the takeover. HHC is aiming to force ITT to put its \$11.5bn offer to its shareholders. A US court in Nevada will hear the case on 29 September.

Even if the bid fails Ladbroke plans to rapidly increase its own hotel development programme in the wake of strong world-wide demand for hotels which continues to push up room rates and occupancy levels strongly. It plans to open 10 new hotels next year and 20 in 1999.

Ladbroke refused to rule out launching a bid for Capital Corporation, the troubled casino group embroiled in legal action against three disaffected former employees over allegations of serious internal control problems. "We are still watching developments at Capital Corporation," Mr George said yesterday.

Ladbroke announced a 39 per cent rise in interim pre-tax profits to £101.2m, well ahead of analysts' expectations, thanks to the buoyant hotel market. Betting and gaming profits rose 31 per cent to £56.9m due to a strong performance from its bookies chain. Its 49's fixed-odds numbers game has been a "great success", helping it to shrug off the damaging effect of the National Lottery.



Peter George: Hoping to do business with Hilton of US

a Ladbroke spokesman said. There had been intense market speculation that HHC was likely to turn its attention to Ladbroke if its bid for ITT failed. However, analysts believe HHC is unlikely to be interested in Ladbroke's betting division, which includes Vernons pools and its betting shops, and will probably not be tempted to launch a hostile bid for the group. Mr George said HHC was very unlikely to act on its promise to take a 5 per cent stake in Ladbroke "until it had resolved its bid for ITT".

HHC is taking legal action to

B&J bids for discount chain

Magnus Grimond

Brown & Jackson, the Pound-stretcher discount retail chain, has come to the rescue of WEW Group, the troubled owner of fellow discount group What Everyone Wants, with a £6.5m bid. The agreed deal, along with the £7.65m purchase of Your More Store, another retail operation, will make B&J one of Britain's biggest discount chains with 451 stores.

The 4.5p-a-share cash bid for WEW will come as a relief for shareholders, who have seen the price tumble from 129p in 1991 to 4.25p, down 0.5p yesterday. In July the group forecast a loss of more than £4m for the 12 months to 2 August in the latest of three profit warnings this year and effectively put itself up for sale.

The B&J offer has been accepted by US venture capital group Warburg, Pincus and

other holders controlling 28.8 per cent of the shares.

The WEW board, chaired by James Millar, the former William Low chairman, warned that in the absence of the B&J offer, the group's banks might withdraw their support after January 1998. Brown & Jackson, which is controlled by P&P, a South African discount group, said it expected no job losses or further shop closures to result from the takeover.

Barnes may float to fund expansion

Cathy Newman

Barnes Trust Media, a television production and facilities group, is considering a stock market flotation in an effort to raise money for acquisitions.

Simon Bowen, executive chairman and founder of Barnes, said the company was on the brink of appointing an adviser and a flotation was "on the agenda". Barnes came to prominence earlier this year when it bought Teddington Studios off Pearson for £9m. The company said the deal made it the highest privately owned media facilities group in the UK.

Mr Bowen said yesterday he had his eye on two sizeable acquisitions. Barnes has been tipped as a possible bidder for Tele-Cine Cell, another facilities company which warned in July that persistent problems with its Cell special effects arm would lead to losses in the first half of the year. However, Mr Bowen said the acquisitions being investigated were outside the facilities sector. He added: "If the acquisitions are successful, they may be the trigger to accelerate the flotation option."

Mr Bowen said the company

could be valued on the market at in excess of £25m, but he indicated the acquisitions could double Barnes' size.

Barnes, which is forecasting a turnover of £22m to £25m for the current year, is an umbrella company for a string of organisations. It comprises Teddington Studios; the House, a post-production house which specialises in commercials and pop promotions; Klones, a broadcast dubbing and video duplication unit; and Arena Transmissions, which produces special interest travel, weather and Chinese channels.

Dean Street Post, the group's first acquisition in 1993, merged with the House in June this year.

Teddington, a fulcrum of the film and television industry since the 1920s, was part of Barnes Television, for which Pearson paid £100m in 1992. It makes light entertainment programmes such as *This is Your Life* and *Men Behaving Badly*.

Mr Bowen said there was no reason why Barnes should not come to the full market. He said such a move was not vital for the company's future, but making a large acquisition was a good commercial reason for floating.

Leigh agrees to £116m takeover

Clifford German

General Utilities, owned by the giant Générale des Eaux of France, yesterday launched an agreed bid for Leigh Industries, less than three weeks after making its first direct approach for what is one of the UK's top six waste disposal companies.

The £116m bid is worth 175p a share, equal to 24.3 times Leigh's earnings in 1996-97.

The announcement of the deal was accompanied by a market raid on Leigh's shares, that easily topped up 29.99 per cent of the equity. The takeover offer is 47 per cent more than the closing middle market price

of Leigh's shares on 8 August, the last business day before the approach was made.

Leigh's chief executive, Shaun Bowden, said yesterday the takeover represented a good deal for employees and shareholders and gave them the benefits of the £50m restructuring of the business two years ahead of schedule.

His own future has not been discussed but General Utilities' finance director, Joseph Mangion, emphasised the buyer planned to develop its waste management business to complement its other UK businesses, which include Connex, the operators of Southeast Trains.

Leigh's business, along with its rivals, has suffered from a combination of the long-term decline in the manufacturing industry, increasing competition in the UK market and problems with its chemical treatment technology. As long ago as 1991-92, it made a profit of £14m on a turnover of £119m.

The business plunged into the red in 1995-96 recording a loss of £9.6m as it struggled to cut costs and staff and eliminate loss-making activities.

The chemical and clinical waste divisions continued to lose money, but the group as a whole made a partial recovery last year and announced a prof-

it of £6.9m before exceptional losses on a turnover of just £115m in the year to 31 March 1997.

Leigh's business, which includes the collection and treatment of industrial waste in landfill sites in Essex, the Midlands and North-west, will be integrated with General Utilities' UK waste management businesses, which had a turnover of £200m last year and specialised in the collection, recycling and disposal of municipal waste and specialist liquid waste.

General Utilities hopes to use Leigh to offer integrated packages to industrial and municipal customers. Leigh shares closed at 173p, up 21p.

Provident Financial keeps up growth

Clifford German

Provident Financial, the Bradford-based provider of door-to-door unsecured loans and non-comprehensive motor insurance, increased profits by 15 per cent to £54.7m in the first half of the year, maintaining its steady upward path.

Home credit turnover rose by 11 per cent to £164m, bad debts increased by 14 per cent to

£23.7m, and profits rose 11.6 per cent to £50.8m. The number of customers was up 9 per cent to 1,334,000, and the number of agents, who are mostly recruited from customers, increased by 4 per cent to 10,268.

The formula is well tested and the market still not saturated, but a small pilot operation has been started in Poland and another is being set up in the Czech Republic to see if the

business can be transplanted successfully.

The insurance division concentrates on women drivers and third-party, fire and theft business. It resisted the temptation to cut premiums and chase market share. Turnover dropped by a quarter to £45m but profits actually grew by a quarter to £6.7m.

Howard Bell, chief executive, saw no real signs that premiums

generally were moving significantly higher, but when they do Provident's business should benefit.

Meanwhile it is market testing a 10-year life assurance policy which offers up to £80,000 worth of cover for a young, non-smoking female down to £5,000 for a male smoker in his fifties for a flat rate of £3 a week over 40 weeks of the year.

Standard Life's rising star reappears at RBS

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

Benny Higgins, the 36-year-old rising star who unexpectedly resigned as top sales manager for Standard Life in June for personal reasons, has popped up at Royal Bank of Scotland, where he has been given the job of sorting out the Birmingham Midlands acquisition.

Mr Higgins' resignation from the insurance giant came a day after that of John Thomson, then Standard Life's chief investment manager. Sadly Mr Higgins was on holiday yesterday, so was unavailable to shed light on the subject.

From next month the former captain of the Celtic youth team will "lead the project to derive maximum benefits from the acquisition of Birmingham Midlands Building Society". Personally I think Mr Higgins, described by colleagues as "surprisingly witty for an actuary", sees himself as another Martin Taylor. Watch out, George Mathewson.

Richard Branson is overwhelmingly the most popular choice for Best UK Business Leader, followed far behind by Sir John Harvey-Jones, Lord Hanson and Archie Norman. This is the verdict from 200 manag-

ing directors and finance directors polled by KPMG in the accountancy firm's second British Business Leadership Survey.

Which is a bit worrying, when you consider that Sir John and Lord Hanson are the wrong side of 70, and the former has managed anything for at least seven years.

Another bizarre finding: 11 per cent of those polled are anti-technology luddites, saying: "I have people to do that for me." Another 38 per cent simply say: "I know where the on/off switch is." A measly 3 per cent admit to having high computer skills.

How intriguing to hear a story in which sleepy old Auntie Beeb has got one over on Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB for a change. The BBC's forthcoming 24-hour news channel has just poached glamorous presenter Sarah Montague from Sky News, Lord Murdoch's own round-the-clock news service. Other BBC presenters will include the veteran foreign cor-

respondents John Simpson and Charles Wheeler.

Jefferson Smurfit, the Dublin-based paper group, has recruited a former governor of Illinois as a non-executive director, reflecting the recycling specialist's big ambitions across the water. James R Thompson, 61, served a record four terms as governor from 1977 to 1991 and was a US Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, where he argued more than 200 cases. Sounds like a useful person to have on board in that most litigious of countries.

I never knew DIY had been around for so long until I traced the history of AG Stanley, which Boots has just sold to a venture capital company. AG Stanley owns two DIY chains, Fads and HomeStyle. Alec Stanley started the ball rolling in 1945 when he opened his first DIY shop, Bargain Wall Papers in Bromley, Kent. People were coming back from the Second World War and needed to



Benny Higgins: 'Surprisingly witty for an actuary' say colleagues

do up their dilapidated homes cheaply. Mr Stanley had a nose for the market and in 1946 he was joined by his son, Malcolm, and opened another shop. In the 1950s Mr Stanley embraced the idea of pile 'em high, sell 'em low, becoming

the first DIY shop owner to sell paint by the gallon. In the 1960s he rebadged some of his stores as Fads - Fine Arts Discount Stores.

Mr Stanley took the company public in 1974. By then he had 200 stores. He then bought 80 stores under the Decor Mosaic label from Blakely Morris Group and 90 Decor Market shops from Berger Paints. Then in 1980 he overhauled the Victoria Mills' wall coverings factory at Holmes Chapel from Crown Wall Coverings, and Mr Stanley launched a group of small ironmongers' shops called Mr Stanley.

More acquisitions followed - the Java paint factory in Southall and the Home Charm chain of shops from Harris Queensway. By 1988 he had eight different store facias under his control. Then he sold out to Ward White, which was bought by Doots the following year.

So did Mr Stanley retire to Barbados to spend his life? Not a chance. The Stanley family launched another DIY chain called Focus DIY. Talk about sticking to your core business.

John Willcock

IN BRIEF

House prices rise by 1.2 per cent

House prices climbed by 1.2 per cent in August, Nationwide Building Society reported yesterday. The increase left the annual rate of house price inflation at 12.1 per cent, a shade below its July rate, and took the average price to £60,581. Nationwide said the recovery was showing signs of becoming more firmly established outside London, confirming the pattern of gains in the other regions reported by the Land Registry on Wednesday. Both sets of figures suggested the North is beginning to catch up with the South-east. In London new buyers were being forced further down-market, and prices of flats and small houses were rising faster than those of bigger properties.

ING buys US brokerage for \$600m

ING, the Dutch banking group, yesterday paid \$600m (£371m) in cash for the US brokerage Furan Selz LLC in order to boost its equities business in the world's largest financial market. The price, which was inflated by \$175m in bonuses for Furan employees, exceeded the sum analysts expected ING to pay by at least \$100m. Swiss Bank Corp paid \$600m when it beat ING to acquire Dillon Read & Co, a larger bank, earlier this year.

S&N cautious on devolution plans

Scottish & Newcastle said it expected to increase development spend in the year ahead while maintaining business momentum. Sir Alastair Grant, chairman, soured a note of caution at the company's annual general meeting on the Government's plans for devolving a Scottish Parliament. He said that if a new parliament was given powers to vary income taxes, Scottish business could be disadvantaged. Sir Alastair said the group's leisure operations were being held back by exchange rates. He said the group derived more than 90 per cent of its sales and profits from markets outside Scotland and from a wide range of international markets. Sir Alastair said these could be used in such a way that Scottish business and Scottish business talent might be at a disadvantage compared with the rest of the UK.

Rentokil initial growth should continue

Sophus Berendsen AS, a Danish commercial services company, said it expected continued good growth from its Rentokil initial subsidiary. The company said its profit before tax for the six months to the end of June jumped 32 per cent to \$45.5m kroner (£75m). Sales rose to 3,595bn kroner from 3,308bn kroner and operating profit rose to 164.3m kroner from 129.3m kroner. The earnings report is one of the last before Sophus splits into two separately traded companies. Its 32.2 per cent stake in Rentokil is to be included in a new listed company called Ratin A/S.

EFT Group acquisition escapes referral

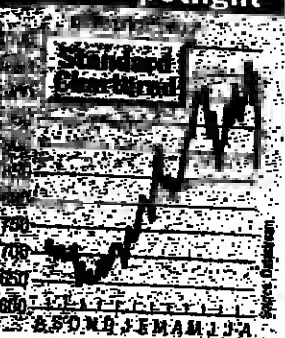
Margaret Beckett, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, will not refer the acquisition of EFT Group by the Bank of Scotland's unit, British Linen Bank, to the Monopolies & Mergers Commission. The Bank of Scotland said as a result its recommended offer for EFT Group was now unconditional in all respects.

Company Results				
	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Country Overseas (I)	27.7m (19.6m)	3.35m (2.22m)	14.3p (11.5p)	0.5p (I)
Overseas Group (I)	27.7m (28.3m)	2.95m (2.64m)	0.3p (0.4p)	2.1p (2.4p)
Era Group (SP)	91.7m (77.2m)	-13.32m (1.8m)	-10.27p (0.34p)	nil (0.1p)
Guinness Peat (I)	52.9m (41.5m)	19.80m (11.6m)	1.37p (1.12p)	nil
Investment (I)	66.0m (73.8m)	2.6m (4.23m)	3.4p (3.7p)	1.35p (1.50p)
Leisure (I)	11.9m (7.0m)	4.55m (3.75m)	4.3p (3.7p)	0.85p (I)
Overseas Group (I)	498.7m (303.1m)	54.7m (47.5m)	25.5p (20.2p)	8.55p (I)
Leisure (I)	1.949m (1.98m)	101.2m (84.2m)	825p (143.9p)	122.1p (17p)
Overseas (I)	94.5m (76.2m)	10.35m (10.31m)	6.54p (6.79p)	2.4p (2.4p)
Provident Financial (I)	209.2m (203.1m)	54.7m (47.5m)	18.3p (11.7p)	1.55p (1.47p)
Overseas Group (I)	175.8m (184.4m)	3.1m (2.7m)	8.9p (7.6p)	3.25p (2.75p)
Leisure & Leisure (I)	1.11m (1.15m)	165.1m (179.0m)	29.1p (28.7p)	8.75p (7.5p)
Overseas (I)	2.2m (1.98m)	116.0m (108.0m)	6.53p (4.94p)	2.2p (2.2p)
Slough Estates (I)	138.2m (109.0m)	50.5m (37.4m)	8.5p (6.7p)	3.4p (2.5p)
Stanley (I)	957.0m (I)	-21.00p (I)	-0.00p (I)	nil
Swedish (I)	17.7m (22.5m)	32.00p (66.00p)	0.00p (0.15p)	0.2p (0.2p)
T&N (I)	132.0m (110.0m)	114.7m (98.1m)	13.9p (9.9p)	0.2p (0.2p)
United Action (I)	58.0m (33.8m)	8.82m (5.56m)	10.4p (6.9p)	1.2p (1.2p)
(I) - First (I) - Interim (I) - New months				

Data Bank

FTSE 100	4865.4	-61.5
FTSE 250	4521.4	-28.2
FTSE 350	2340.5	-26.7
SEAQ VOLUME	958.7m shares	
41,372 bargains		
Bills Index	96.65	+0.15

Share spotlight



Far East currency crisis savages HSBC and Standard

Taking Stock

HSBC and Standard Chartered, only a few weeks ago starting in a rampant banking sector, were savaged as the stock market took fright over the growing currency turmoil in the Far East.

The two banks have extensive Pacific connections and their shares, in busy trading, outperformed determined selling. HSBC sterling-denominated shares slumped 150.5p to 1,960.5p and Standard 103.5p to 874p.

After their rip-roaring run the two banks are clearly vulnerable to any tidings of woe and they were unable to withstand the wild stories flying around about likely developments in the Far East.

Only weeks ago the market was awash with heady forecasts about HSBC, owner of Midland Bank, and Standard. Analysts were convinced they would move higher with, for example, some advocating that

HSBC would soon hit 2,600p. It did, earlier this month, achieve 2,347p but has since drifted lower.

The Far Eastern upheaval has caught the market on the hop. Thailand's well-documented problems were seen as an isolated, one-off problem; not one which could engulf other nations.

Standard had already weathered the Thailand financial crisis. Last month it was hit briefly by worries it had sustained heavy derivative losses following the slide in the country's once booming currency, the baht.

The Malaysian ringgit is the latest casualty, hitting a new low for the second day running. Indonesia's rupiah, the Singapore dollar and the Philippine peso were others under pressure.

There are fears the raiding speculators will soon turn their attention to the Hong Kong



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year

dollar. The overnight 657-point fall to 1,487.1 in the Hang Seng share index was, however, dismissed as a technical setback by some London traders. The success of the latest Hong Kong land auction, they suggested, showed the former colony's economic health was too robust for its currency to wilt under pressure. And the Chinese authorities were in a strong enough position to, if necessary, counter any raid.

The rapidly expanding Far East has provided a happy hunting ground for many companies and the impact of the Pacific storm was not confined to the two banks. Cable

& Wireless, suffering the added distress of a loss by its Australian associate, had to wrestle with its Hong Kong Telecom involvement, falling 18.5p to 54p.

In cheap, with extensive Pacific interests, lost 13.5p to 271.5p and luxury goods group Vendome fell 14.5p to 461p.

Far Eastern investment trusts suffered the predictable pressure. Footsie fell 61.5 points to 4,845.4 with New York combining with the Far East to inflict a double whammy. US investors were again fretting about interest rates and the Dow Jones was sharply lower in London trading.

The raft of company results was largely encouraging. Still, squeezed margins and Far Eastern exposure put Rolls-Royce into a spin, off 19p to 235.5p in heavy trading. Reckitt & Coleman was another weaker, 20.5p to 961p, after results.

Heavy trading in Great Universal Stores lowered the price 12p to 633p and Vodafone fell 4.5p to 309.5p despite upgrades following better-than-expected subscriber figures.

BT shaded to 402p with arbitrage-inspired trading lifting the share turnover to nearly 85 million shares.

Telewest, the country's second-largest cable group, fell 4p to 75p although it denied merger talks, thought to be with NTL, had collapsed.

Scottish & Newcastle hardened to 724.5p on its trading statement and Allied Domecq added 5.5p to 466p as NatWest Securities said it was a "weak

hold". Ladbroke, on results, firmed 1p to 261.5p.

Thistle Hotels, encouraged by Ladbroke's hotel returns, gained 10.5p to 153p.

Commercial Union resisted the downward pressure, gaining 11p to 745.5p, just below its year's peak, as takeover hopes stirred again. Norwich Union, on Halifax bid speculation, was at one time up 5p to 350.5p but ended 6p lower to 339.5p. Schroders, the investment group, edged ahead 17.5p to 1,882.5p. The market remains convinced a mega-bid in the financial sector is being prepared.

Leigh interests, the waste disposal group on the end of an agreed 175p offer from General Utilities, the French group, rose 21p to 173p.

Anglesey Mining, struggling to reactivate mining on Parys Mountain in North Anglesey, rose 1p to 3.75p, reflecting a share placing at 5p.

Shares of Carbo, known as Hopkinson until June, are bumping along near their low at 25p; they were 80p in 1992. After running into losses it has been pulled round, helped by a series of disposals and acquisitions which have reshaped the business.

It is now focused on its abrasive operations which have grown following moves into distribution. Results for the year ended January are expected to emerge at around 21m, plus 660,000 of disposal profits. With recovery well under way and assets of 35p a share, Carbo may be tempted to clinch a significant acquisition next year.

Build up at Serif, a struggling security printer, continues. John Gulliver and his associate have picked up a further 2.5 million shares, taking their holding to 20 per cent. The shares are 2p.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details: Ex-rights = Ex-dividend at Ex-nt a United Securities Market's Suspended or Partly Paid per Nil Paid Shares. * AM Stock Source: FT Information

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Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Vol/1000	Stock	Vol/1000	Stock	Vol/1000
BT	800000	Sid Chard	100000	Smith Barney	100000
Rolls Royce	280000	GUS	150000	Barclays	100000
BT	180000	HSBC	120000	Centrica	100000
March Union	160000	British Steel	160000	Cable & Wire	100000
Chel Singapore	150000	BT	150000	Platinum	100000

FTSE 100 index hour by hour

Open 4821.2 up 143	11.00 4882.2 down 177	14.00 4876.5 down 30.3
08.00 4821.3 up 144	12.00 4854.3 down 10.2	15.00 4878.7 down 48.1
10.00 4837.7 down 16.2	13.00 4874.4 down 45.5	16.00 4852.8 down 62.1
		Close 4845.4 down 61.5

High Low Stock Price Chg Yld Div

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

Telecommunications

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

Retailers, Food

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

Retailers, General

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

Printing & Paper

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

Property

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

Life Assurance

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

Support Services

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

Water

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

Rights Issues

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

Recent Issues

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

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Government Securities

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

Index-linked

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

Shorts

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

Undated

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

Mediums

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
2007	48	50	BT	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00
2007	45	47	Rolls Royce	235.5	-19	4.5	2.00

Longs

2007	Low	High	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	Div
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sport

Slick Serevi refuses to be typecast

Chris Hewett reports on the Fijian who aims to prove the doubters wrong when he plays for Leicester in the Allied Dunbar Premiership season, which starts tomorrow

Delusions, fallacies, misconceptions. Waisale Serevi, the Fijian maestro whose unique gifts of mastery and mystery mark him so obviously as a rugby player of rare genius, tries hard to disguise his exasperation as he gives the lie to yet another of the received wisdoms that follow him around like a ball and chain, but a minute narrowing of the eyes and pursing of the lips give the game away.

He has heard them all a million times over, yet still they have the capacity to frustrate.

"Serevi is a seven-sevens player and no more; he can't play fifteens." "Serevi is too small to mix it with the big boys. He'll be found out when he gets caught in a ruck or two." "Serevi can only play when the sun is beating down. He'll be like a block of ice come January." Given that the 29-year-old from Suva can count his English appearances on the fingers of one hand, Joe Public seems to know an awful lot about his shortcomings.

We'll take the insolent presumptions one by one. Seven-sevens and only seven-sevens? "Mimmm, I think you'll find he can play whatever game of rugby you ask him to play," says Bob Dwyer, the Leicester coach who has brought the Brilliant One to Welford Road on a two-year deal

The Leicester forwards win quality ball and if I see some of it, who knows?

that effectively begins tomorrow, when the Tigers take on Gloucester in their opening Allied Dunbar Premiership set-to of the new season. "If a player of real talent could do it in seven-sevens but not fifteens, you'd have to look at the coach. I might be putting myself up there to be shot at, but I don't think I'm risking my backside on this one."

Too small, then? "Small? You're joking," scoffs Dwyer. "He's built like a brick out-house. Have you seen those thighs? Those forearms? I doubt if there's a player at Leicester with better muscular definition."

Okay, how about the inclement weather? Serevi is more than happy to answer this one himself. "I've just played through three Japanese winters and I know all about snow," he points out. "I admit to feeling the cold during the World Cup sevens at Murrayfield in '93, but even the New Zealanders were moaning that weekend. It was freezing." Then Dwyer chips in again. "They turn out on absolute mudheaps in Fiji, you know. Either that or on something resembling concrete. He'll be fine, I promise you."

The proof of this particular padding will be in the playing, of course. Serevi has been selected on the wing tomorrow - ask Dwyer which wing and he



Waisale Serevi can play almost anywhere, is a Test class goalkicker and has a sidestep, a body swerve, and a double shuffle

Photograph: Peter Jay

replies, only half-joking: "Which ever wing he likes" - so it is perfectly possible that he will be starved of the oxygen of possession and left to kick his heels a la Rory Underwood in all those one-dimensional Leicester sides of none-too-distant memory. He does not anticipate asphyxiation by boredom, however. "In Fiji, I was without the ball for many years. The Leicester forwards win quality ball and if I see some of it, who knows?"

Who indeed, for Serevi is capable of anything. He can play full-back, wing, centre, outside-half or even scrum-half, he is a goalkicker of Test class and possesses a sidestep, a body swerve, a hitch-kick and a double shuffle of such baffling superiority that it is no exaggeration to describe him as a cross between David Campese

and Harry Houdini. Oh yes, he's quick, too. Devastatingly quick. Rugby has been the instinctive street sport for generations of Fijian children and Serevi began playing as a 10-year-old. "I was always small compared to the rest, at least in terms of height," he admits, conscious of his 5ft 4in frame. But his extraordinary ability as a half-player registered almost immediately and in the late 1980s he embarked on his golden run at the annual Hong Kong Sevens - a tournament he bestrides like some miniature colossus.

"I haven't missed a Hong Kong tournament since '89 - I suppose it is my stage and I love the excitement of the tournament," he says. "But my great ambition is to represent Fiji in the 1999 World Cup and I don't really care where they pick me.

Wing, full-back, stand-off, anywhere will do. As a country, we need to reclaim our tradition in 15-a-side rugby and with Mr Brad Johnstone coaching us [endeavouring, he never refers to the former All Black prop without the prefix "Mr"], I believe we can achieve great things in that direction."

In Fiji, as in the other south seas island, the grass is always greener for young, ambitious players. They see more lucrative pastures, more money, in New Zealand and Australia and I don't blame them for leaving. We are a small country and it has been damaging for us, but now we are bringing people back to Fiji and beginning to translate our sevens successes to the bigger game. We beat Western Samoa by 60 points last season. Some of the Fijians who played that day still cannot

believe it happened, but it did. We're getting there."

Serevi has headed Leicester's "wanted" list for more than a year. At the end of the 1995-96 season, he turned out against the Tigers in a World XV showpiece match at Twickenham and was approached by Peter Wheeler, the chief executive at Welford Road. "I'd been living in Kyoto and playing for Mitsubishi, but I knew of Leicester and their reputation. The offer was good, so here I am."

He will soon be joined by his wife Kara, a welfare official attached to a United Nations military hospital in Sinai, and their two daughters, Una and Asineta, aged three and two respectively. If Leicester win their prolonged battle to equip another Fijian, the spectacularly effective World Cup sevens wing Marika Vunibaka, with a

work permit, Serevi will feel even more at home in his new surroundings.

"This is a big challenge for me," he admits, conscious of the culture gap that not only divides sevens from fifteens but, far more profoundly, Far East from East Midlands. "But it is one I feel I can meet. It will not be easy; in sevens, the pitch is huge and there is space to run but in fifteens, the forwards do the work and control the game. I am not a forward, but I like the ball. From what I see at Leicester, there are people here who can give it to me."

Dwyer, for one, will insist on it. "What can Waisale do for us? Well, let's put it simply. He can score a lot of tries. What else matters? What indeed? Come rain or shine, Leicester's most exotic recruit is ready to float like a butterfly and sting like a bee.

England delay naming coach

England's Test players will have to wait until next week to find out who their World Cup manager and coach will be.

The planned meeting today between the National Playing Committee and the new Rugby Football Union Management Board will go ahead, but no announcement will be made.

Untangling contractual obligations for the candidates and establishing conditions for the international manager and coaches has clearly proved impossible in just over a week since Ian McGeechan rejected the job and Rowell then resigned.

The RFU hope their negotiations produce a management team by next week. The deadline is 12 September, with an England squad session due on 17 September. A group of selectors must be in place by then.

Kevin Bowring, the coach of Wales, yesterday described England as "arrogant" and blamed them for his side's early start to the international season this weekend. Wales take on Romania at The Racecourse in Wrexham tomorrow, which Bowring claims is far too early in the season for his players.

"We should have had all the international matches on the same dates, but England would not do it," he said. "Instead, they quite arrogantly just went ahead and booked a whole block of international fixtures without consulting the other home nations."

The New Zealand flanker Michael Jones has ruled out a return to action this year, including the tour of Britain. Jones ruptured the patella tendon in his left knee in the 14 June Test against Fiji at Albany.

Noel Henderson, a former captain of Ireland and Lion, has died, aged 69, after a short illness. Henderson made his debut for Ireland against Scotland in the Triple Crown winning year of 1949 and went on to win 40 international caps.

Magpies ready for the elite

He was the returning hero, the man whose goal late Wednesday night could be worth £10m to Newcastle, but the formalities still had to be observed.

Temur Ketsbaia may have eluded Croatia Zagreb's defence to score the aggregate winner that put Newcastle United into today's Champions' League draw, but immigration officials were harder to evade when the team returned in the early hours of Thursday morning. The Georgian cut an incongruous picture as he stood alone crouched over an entry form, passport in one hand, pen in the other, his team long gone.

The scene could not have been more different from that in the Maksimir Stadium six hours earlier when Ketsbaia was mobbed by his team-mates after earning Newcastle a 2-2 draw and a 4-3 aggregate victory in their European Cup preliminary round tie.

Ketsbaia, signed on a free transfer from AEK Athens in the summer, said as he waited for his baggage: "I can hardly remember the goal but it was a great moment for me and the club. I was expecting the game to go to penalties and it would have been very difficult for us as they had a psychological advantage."



Glenn Moore on the Champions' League challenges that lie ahead for Kenny Dalglish and Newcastle

Croatia had forced extra time with an injury-time aggregate equaliser and Ketsbaia added: "I cannot say how we will do in the Champions' League until the draw - but there will be teams in it who are not as good as Croatia Zagreb."

Uefa's seeding system, and the extension of the Champions' League to non-champions with six groups, makes it very difficult for Newcastle to look beyond Christmas and the end of the group stage. Newcastle could find themselves paired with Juventus, Barcelona and IFK Gothenburg and even a best case scenario would group them with PSV Eindhoven or Monaco. As only the group winners and second best-placed runners-up qualify, the size of Newcastle's task is obvious.

Whatever the draw, the great bonus of the Champions' League is a guaranteed six matches. While the shareholders will like the gloss that gives to the bottom line, to Kenny Dalglish it means he and his team now have time to expand their European education.

As Manchester United have come to realise, European football has its own disciplines and demands. It is not an arena to be taken by storm but one which has to be conquered by experience.

Newcastle had an early lesson in that three seasons ago when, having thrashed Antwerp 10-2 on aggregate, they raced to a 3-0 lead over Athletic Bilbao in the next round of their UEFA Cup campaign. It seemed too easy - and it was. The Basques pulled two goals back at St James' Park as Newcastle went recklessly forward and completed their comeback in Spain.

Newcastle's team has undergone considerable reconstruction since then, but watching them on Wednesday there were times when it seemed that, however hard Kenny Dalglish works on his team, the spirit of Kevin Keegan's side refuses to go away. They continually had chances to score but failed to take them, while similar laxity in defence allowed Zagreb to come within seconds of taking the tie to penalties.

"We'll learn from that and from the first leg," said Shay Given, the 21-year-old goalkeeper who was making his European debut in the tie. "It's a big step for me. In a year I have gone from Pontins League to Champions' League, and it was an unbelievable night."

"We were devastated at the equaliser but Kenny Dalglish got us going again," the Irishman added. "He told us to lift our chins and get into them. He has been there and done it and that's a great help."

The Newcastle manager did win three European Cups as a player with Liverpool - but this was the first time he had successfully completed a European game and he is also learning. Newcastle have the experience of John Barnes and Ian Rush - another former European Cup winner - available for the Champions' League. Barnes' ability to retain possession and control the pace of a game may be particularly useful as Newcastle step up in class.

One team Newcastle will not face in the group stage is Manchester United, as Uefa is keeping teams from the same country apart. Both clubs will have to kick off their group games at 7.45pm, and ITV will regionalise its coverage.

Ferdinand poised for England

GLENN MOORE
Football Correspondent

Rio Ferdinand is expected to be included in Glenn Hoddle's first England squad of the season when he announces today his party to play Moldova on 10 September.

The 18-year-old West Ham defender is seen as the leading candidate for the sweeper role which is a fundamental part of Hoddle's long-term plan.

The England coach had planned to use Jamie Redknapp in the position during *Le Tournoi de France*, but the Liverpool midfielder missed the summer tournament through injury and is yet to recover.

Ferdinand has previously trained with the full squad under both Terry Venables and Hoddle and has not looked out of place.

His chances of a debut are improved as the Moldova match is likely to be irrelevant in the final World Cup standings (assuming England win) and because Hoddle is without four established central defenders in Tony Adams, Stuart Pearce, Sol Campbell and Martin Keown.

Those injuries could also bring a call-up to Steve Watson, who again impressed in defence during Newcastle's European Cup win in Zagreb on Wednesday. Watson, who has represented England at junior levels, can also play at right-back. He faces competition from John Scates and Rob Jones.

Hoddle is expected to recall Liverpool's Steve McManaman, who controversially missed *Le Tournoi* with injury, as well as Les Ferdinand. Robbie Fowler may not yet be ready. Other players under consideration after impressive starts to the season are the Blackburn pair of Chris Sutton and Jason Wilcox.

Attilio Lombardo and Stefano Eranio, summer signings for Crystal Palace and Derby County respectively, have been named in the Italian squad for next month's World Cup qualifier in Georgia. The full squad will be announced next week, but the Italian Football Federation notified expatriate players in the party yesterday. The others are Roberto di Matteo and Gianfranco Zola (Chelsea), Fabrizio Ravanelli (Middlesbrough), Christian Panucci (Real Madrid) and Christian Vieri (Atletico Madrid).

League to take on Uefa

MATTHEW SLATER

The Football League is to lodge an official complaint against Uefa, European football's governing body, with the European Commission in Brussels over the decision to deny a place in the UEFA Cup to the winners of the Coca-Cola Cup.

Demostating that nothing irritates a Briton quite like European interference, the Football League chairman, David Sheepshanks, said yesterday: "Uefa's actions amount to an abuse of a dominant position."

The decision to end the Coca-Cola Cup's status as a qualifying route was taken in 1994, following a French application for a Uefa place as a reward for the new league cup competition. Uefa stated that this was possible only if the high-

est domestic division contained no more than 18 clubs.

"To prejudice the Football League's major knock-out competition because of the size of the Premier League is patently wrong," Sheepshanks said. "It cannot be right that we are held responsible and penalised for something over which we exercise no control."

There are fears that the underlying motive for Uefa's ruling is its own agenda for increased European competition. Sheepshanks, who is the chairman of Ipswich Town, alluded to this when he said: "They continue to expand their own sphere of operations whilst expecting domestic competitions to contract."

Mike Lee, a Premier League spokesman, said: "We believe that decisions on the size of domestic leagues should be taken at a national level." He added that the Premier League

had already reduced its numbers from 22 to 20, and that there were no plans for any further reduction.

However, it is significant that the Premier League has organised a meeting for representatives from Europe's major leagues in London on 10 September. The Football League's recourse to European justice may well be a single chapter in a larger story - the threat Uefa's club competitions pose to the respective domestic leagues.

Where this leaves this year's Coca-Cola Cup is anybody's guess. Martin O'Neill, the manager of the holders Leicester City, perhaps the last such recipients of a Uefa Cup place, was open in his support for the League's challenge to Uefa, saying: "The competition would be devalued if the place was lost."

Paganin set to replace Pearce

ALAN NIXON

Newcastle United are to make a £3.8m bid for the Internazionale defender, Massimo Paganin. The Magpies' manager, Kenny Dalglish, has tabled an offer for the centre-half who is also a target for Liverpool.

Newcastle's move for Paganin is timely as Stuart Pearce faces a spell on the sidelines with an injury he picked up against Croatia Zagreb.

The Football League yesterday rejected Brighton and Hove Albion's request to share Millwall's New Den for the rest of the season. While the League had given the green light for the club to play their "home" games at Gillingham this term and for another two seasons, the plans

to move instead to south London were turned down.

While Millwall were happy to see their ground used every week, there were objections to the proposal - the most pressing coming from the police, which swayed the decision of the League's Board of Directors.

Tommy Brabin's unhappy stay at Leeds United is about to end if he can agree personal terms with the Spanish club, Real Zaragoza. The Leeds manager, George Graham, confirmed yesterday that the two clubs had agreed an undisclosed fee for the Swedish striker.

Bolton are the latest club to pursue Peter Rudi, the Norwegian international midfielder who is also being chased by Newcastle United, Sheffield Wednesday and Southampton - but

not Wimbledon, despite their links with Rudi's club, Molde.

The Scotland and Celtic striker, Darren Jackson, has been ruled out of action for at least three months because of a neurological problem.

Celtic's general manager, Jack Brown, stressed last night that Jackson is not suffering from a brain tumour, but he did admit that the illness could be career-threatening.

The illness first came to light on Tuesday, when Jackson missed Celtic's Uefa Cup victory against Tirol Innsbruck. "Very extensive tests followed, and there was a problem which affects Darren's brain," Brown explained yesterday.

Coca-Cola Cup draw, Northern Ireland World Cup squad, Digest, page 23

Case happy to be main man at Bashley

Non-League notebook
RUPERT METCALF

When Torrington travel from north Devon to the New Forest tomorrow to take on Bashley in the preliminary round of the FA Cup, they may be relieved that they are unlikely to find the home team's player-manager in the opposing line-up.

In charge of the Dr Martens League side is a man who has won four League Championship and three European Cup winners' medals plus a host of other honours. At 43 he is still fit, and the passing of the years has not dimmed the fearsome

shooting and tackling powers with which he made his name.

Jimmy Case was a hero at Liverpool but now he is a long way from Merseyside, trying to steer Bashley to promotion to the Dr Martens Premier Division - and at least the first round proper of the FA Cup, the one English tournament for which he does not hold a winners' medal.

Case's enthusiasm for the game has not been dimmed by his experiences at Brighton, where his spell as manager ended last year amid all the off-the-field strife that plagued the Sussex club's season. He was appointed full-time player-manager of Bashley this summer.

So far, everything is proceeding to plan. Bashley lead the Dr Martens Southern Division with maximum points from four games. Case is registered as player but said this week: "I haven't even been a sub yet. I'll put my boots on some time, though. I'm here to put pressure on the players. If they don't perform, I'll pick myself."

Case is no stranger to the non-League game - he had a spell with Sittingbourne before returning to League football with Brighton, and he played in the Northern Premier League with South Liverpool before launching his Anfield career - so he is aware of its special demands.

"You have to get involved in everything at a club like this, sponsorship, the lot. Every body pulls their weight here," he added. "There was so much off-the-field stuff at Brighton that football was secondary. Here football is everything."

Case is also aware of the appeal of the FA Cup, even in August, many months away from its Wembley showpiece. Bashley battled through to the second round proper in 1994, when they lost 1-0 at home to Swansea. "Getting to the second round was great," he said, "and we want to do it again." With Case in charge, they could be a good bet to do just that.

ON WEDNESDAY IT WAS THEM.

Draw date: 27/8/97. The winning numbers: 4, 7, 22, 25, 31, 47. Bonus number: 20.

Total Sales: £27,597,040. Prize Fund: £13,567,868 (45% of ticket sales plus £1,149,200 Superdraw funding).

CATEGORY	NO. OF WINNERS	AMOUNT FOR EACH WINNER	TOTAL EACH TIER
Match 6 (Jackpot)	2	£2,500,000	£5,000,000
Match 5 plus bonus ball	7	£169,266	£1,184,862
Match 5	485	£1,526	£740,110
Match 4	27,341	£59	£1,613,119
Match 3	501,328	£10	£5,013,280
TOTALS	529,163		£13,567,868

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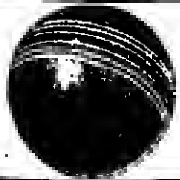
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مركز من الرصين

Boyce looks to Royce for England

(Fr) by P. Mesclard (Fr); 4-2-6-2-0; M. PHILIP-
ISSIS (US) (Fr) by J. Galmard (Fr) 7-6-6-2-1-0 net.
men's singles, second round: S. Testud (Fr)
MAJOU (Fr) 6-4-2-6-8-1; I. Osterloh (US)
Moraru (US) 6-7-1-3-1-0 net; E. Wagner (Ger)
Hy-Boulais (Can) 6-3-0-6-7-6; K. Hatanaka (Ja-
pan) 6-4-2-6-6-6; S. Sugawara (Japan) 5-7-6-3-7-5; M.
RICE (Fr) by S. Farnie (UK) 2-3-2-0-1 net; V. Williams
(UK) by C. Leon Garcia (Sp) 6-0-5-1; A. COETZER
(UK) by A. Douchaine-Baloret (Fr) 6-1-6-1; M. SE-
(US) by T. Snyder (US) 6-2-6-3; M. Oramans
(UK) by M. Balot (Ger) 7-5-6-1; I. SPERLEA (Rom)

Seeds in capitals



Title chase slows
Kent delayed
by showers, page 23

sport

Slick Serevi
Chris Hewett on an exciting recruit for
the new rugby union season, page 22

FA charge may bring long ban for Wright

Football
GUY HODGSON

Ian Wright is facing the prospect of a lengthy suspension from the game after he was charged yesterday by the Football Association with misconduct.

The England striker was charged along with his Arsenal team-mate Patrick Vieira, the club's assistant manager Pat Rice and the Leicester City player Steve Walsh after the 3-3 draw at Filbert Street on Wednesday ended in ugly scenes. Where Wright stands apart from the others, however, is that he is already

on probation after two indiscretions last April.

After fining Wright £15,000, the disciplinary committee warned him then that it was his "last chance". That hearing was only two months ago and now a heavy financial penalty and a long suspension seem inevitable. On the basis of what he has said before, such a punishment could lead to Wright walking away from the game.

Brilliant and inflammable as a firework, Wright has trod a well worn route to Leicester Gate since he was fined £1,500 six years ago for spitting at and making obscene gestures to

Oldham Athletic supporters. Now he has to account for Wednesday night, when he ran from the Arsenal substitutes bench to confront first the referee, Graham Barber, and then Walsh. The two players appeared to square up to each other and to exchange angry words before they were dragged apart by team-mates and club officials. Arsenal players had confronted Barber after the referee had played almost six minutes of injury time. In the 95th minute Walsh headed Leicester's equaliser in a 3-3 draw.

Barber reported Wright, Walsh and Vieira for "adopting

an aggressive stance towards each other after the game". Rice is in trouble for a "conversation" afterwards in the referee's room.

Wright's case is likely to be severely undermined by the fact that he had been substituted in the 77th minute and was in the dug-out when the match ended. It was more than a quarter of an hour after his removal from the action that he ran 40 yards to sign his own disciplinary warrant.

Wright has sufficient regret about his past actions that he has undertaken counselling to curb his temper. However, before the FA gave him his last

chance he had talked openly of "doing a Cantona" and retiring if the national association had come down hard on him.

"Opponents know I will always be in their face," he said a fortnight ago, "eyeballing them, on their backs. That is Premiership football. But I'm fighting hard with my image now." Not hard enough, it would seem.

Arsenal's manager, Arsène Wenger, tried to defend his wayward striker, but even he appeared to lack true conviction. "I can say that Ian Wright was not one of the dirty players on the field," he said. "Maybe it would be too much to punish him."

"He cannot say anything or lift an arm without referees hooking him now and I don't feel he deserves that. I don't think what happened was something important and I've seen more serious things on the field in the last few games."

In the summer it was suggested Wright might be banned for up to 12 games if he transgressed again. However, Martin O'Neill, Leicester's manager, said last night: "If Ian Wright was to be banned for 12 games for what happened on Wednesday it would be very, very harsh. Ian Wright is a bubbly character, but if he wasn't also a very good

player there wouldn't be that much said about him. He is a character because of the ability and bravado that comes from within him. Yet if that was all he was we would consider him a clown, which he isn't."

"Ian is a great player. He's 33 but playing as well as he has ever done in his career and he is good for the game. Nobody wants to condone misbehaviour, but from what I saw of it the whole thing seemed a lot more scary than it really was."

O'Neill, who said he felt the referee had been justified in playing nearly six minutes of injury time, added: "From what I'd

heard I expected to watch the television and see all sorts going on, but there were no fists flying, no physical contact, even if the players were pulled apart."

It was only three weeks ago, at the start of the season, that Alex Ferguson, Manchester United's manager, remembered Wright's flare-up with Peter Schmeichel last season and commented: "I couldn't believe it when the FA used him for their advertising campaign."

The disciplinary committee at Leicester Gate will also be wondering about the wisdom of that this morning.

More football, page 22

Path to last four opens up for Henman

Tennis

JOHN ROBERTS
reports from Flushing Meadow

It might be tempting fate to mention this, but by defeating Thomas Muster, the world No 5, Tim Henman has opened a seedless path to the quarter-finals of the United States Open.

Should the 22-year-old from Oxford continue to produce the impressive form he displayed against Muster in the first round on Wednesday, he could find himself on the court with his Russian rival, Yevgeny Kafelnikov, the No 3 seed. An alternative possibility is that Henman will duel for the first time with Andre Agassi, unseeded and ranked No 63, for a place in the last four.

The only player on Henman's mind at the moment, however, is Wayne Ferreira, the talented South African who today stands between the Briton and an appearance in the third round.

Henman has played Ferreira twice previously, last year, and honours are even. The South African won in two sets on a concrete court at the Canadian Open, the Briton reversing the result on an indoor carpet in Ottawa.

Ferreira, while not necessarily a man for all seasons, his confidence tending to waver, has prospered on all surfaces. He is one of only nine active players to have won titles on concrete,



Thomas Muster launches a mock attack on Tim Henman during the British No 2's first-round victory over the fifth seed in New York

Photograph: Reuters

clay, grass and indoor carpet. His initial triumph, it may be remembered, was in the 1992 Stella Artois grass court championships at Queen's Club.

Once ranked as high as No 6, Ferreira was down to No 55 on arriving in New York this week, his prospects hardly bolstered by memories of first-round defeats in the past two years. He proved to have the fitness and resolve to recover from two sets down in the opening round to defeat Alberto Berasategui, of Spain, 6-3 in the fifth set.

Henman, who lost to Stefan Edberg in the fourth round last year, has virtually safe-

guarded his ranking points with the bonus for defeating Muster, who is 16 spots higher.

"It is no shame to lose to someone like Tim Henman," Muster said after experiencing the full range of the Briton's attacking flair for the best part of four sets. "We will see how he continues. If he keeps playing and serving the way he did today, I think his chances are there against Wayne Ferreira."

Muster, who is approaching 30, was asked what he considered to be the difference between the way he is now and the way he was a few years ago. "Less hair, bigger bank ac-

count," the Austrian former world No 1 said.

Perhaps aware that his days as a pulverising competitor might be drawing to a close, Muster parodied himself by brandishing his racket and chasing Henman off the court after one point in the third set. "That was just a bit of fun," Muster said.

But would he have acted that way a year ago? "That was the only thing I was looking forward to from the beginning of the year, just to be like that at the US Open," he parried.

Henman saw the humour in the situation, although he admitted that he beat a retreat just

in case Muster was about to attack him. "I told him in the locker-room I wasn't scared to admit that I was frightened, so I thought the best thing to do was keep running," he said.

Muster, whose obsessive work ethic enabled him to establish a position of respect in the sport, complimented Henman's fluent skills. "He has great potential," the Austrian said. "He has a very stylish game, especially on indoor surfaces or grass. I think he has a good coach [David Felgate] and I think they can develop together. If you look at the younger players, I think Tim is one who has the poten-

tial to be in the top 10 for quite a while."

Another of the new generation expected to make a lasting impression is Mark Philippoussis, the No 14 seed. The big-serving Australian, who might pose a challenge for Pete Sampras in the semi-finals, advanced to the third round on Wednesday night. His French opponent, Jerome Golmard, retired in the third set, when already two sets down, because of a shoulder injury.

The 20-year-old Philippoussis, in common with the 16-year-old Martina Hingis, takes his mind off tennis with recreational pursuits. The other evening he was

spotted on the corner of Third Avenue and East 51st Street, black cap turned with its peak to the back, casual gear, elbows and knees padded, holding a skateboard.

Anna Kournikova, the attractive 16-year-old who advanced to the semi-finals at Wimbledon this year, was unable to add to her conquests here. Although playing a spirited second set, the Russian was eliminated in the second round by the No 11 seed, Irina Spirica, of Romania, 6-1 3-6 6-3.

Rain delayed yesterday's programme.

Results, Digest, page 23

£22m deal set up for Denilson

ALAN NIXON

The Brazilian prodigy, Denilson, was reported yesterday to have signed for the Spanish side, Real Betis, in what would be a world record transfer deal worth £22m.

The 20-year-old São Paulo striker has been lined up to join Betis after the World Cup finals next year in a deal that will surpass Ronaldo's transfer to Internazionale from Barcelona, which is expected to be worth around £18m when negotiations have been resolved.

Perhaps the most surprising aspect to the mooted deal is the size of the buy-out clause the Spaniards will insert into the contract - £260m. This dwarfs the £91m clause set by Real Madrid for their Dutch midfielder, Clarence Seedorf, this week.

The Betis president, Manuel Ruiz de Lopera, said yesterday that he had reached agreement with São Paulo over the fee and that Denilson would be signing an 11-year contract.

"We worked very hard to get it, but now we can give all the Betis fans something to celebrate," he said.

Manchester United and Tottenham were reported to be looking at Denilson, who played briefly against England in *Le Tournoi* in France during the summer. He also played a key role in the Brazilian side that won the *Copa America* in June.

The player has also been linked with Betis for several months, though Lazio and Real Madrid have also expressed an interest in him. He will not be available to play for the Sevilla side until after the 1998 World Cup, with Betis loaning him back to São Paulo for the coming season as part of the deal.

Baker finds new target

Golf

ANDY FARRELL
reports from Munich

Having been damned by the golfing gods for most of the season, Peter Baker took full advantage of his early morning draw yesterday to stake a claim for the Ryder Cup place he thought was beyond him a month ago.

At no stage this year has Baker looked like adding to his inspired performance in the 1993 match at The Belfry. In his first 22 events, his best result was a tie for 25th place and he missed 12 cuts. Then he went to the Scandinavian Masters.

There, the 29-year-old Midlander finished third. "All I was trying to do was get my card for next year," Baker said. "I had to have the week off after that. I was burnt out."

Baker returned last week at the European Open and finished second, lifting him from 57th in the Ryder Cup table prior to going to Sweden to 20th. A victory at the BMW International, which would complete a natural progression, could enable him to qualify automatically.

An opening 64, eight under par, was the perfect start. "This is all a bonus. The Ryder Cup was not on my mind at all, but to have a chance going into the final tournament is great," Baker added.

The reason is his work with Bill Ferguson, the coach who came to prominence due to his success with Colin Montgomerie and Ian Woosnam. "I am just doing everything better," Baker said.

His fortune was in teeing off in perfect conditions early in the morning, when his round was matched by Carl Watts, whose back nine consisted of eight birdies and a bogey, and two Swedes, Peter Hedblom and Patrik Sjöland. Wayne Westner later equalled the score, finishing his round in the wind and rain of a storm that delayed play for an hour, after which the Frenchman Fabrice Tarnaud returned to take the lead at nine under.

The low scoring makes it hard to evaluate the first-round scores of those vying for the last automatic places in the 12-man team. Jose Maria Olazabal had a 67 in the morning, but Padraig Harrington later battled the elements to finish birdie-eagle for a 66.

"On this course, that was nothing special," Olazabal said. The level par of Ignacio Garrido and Joakim Haeggen left them a long way behind, although in the case of the former it should not matter. Sam Torrance's 75, in front of Europe's captain, Seve Ballesteros, cannot have done his chances any good. The third member of the group, Paul Broadhurst, scored a 68.

Some courses may bring the cream to the top, but the München Nord club, at Eichenried, brings out the worms, or at least it did in a mass eruption last weekend. This is not the usual diet that Montgomerie expects. "There has to be one course which is the easiest on the tour," said Monty, who shot a 65, "and this is it."

He gave his analysis of the test presented by the course: "It is not the longest, the rough is not severe, it's flat, the greens are rolling nicely. My score was three under a par of 68." Ernie Els, a respectful visitor from overseas who scored a 67, was reluctant to commit himself before saying: "It's not the most difficult I've ever played."

A comparison with Winged Foot, where the American Ryder Cup qualifying ended two weeks ago, would be that between a BMW and a Lada.

There were only slightly more scores over par than there were under par at the USPGA Championship and even Ballesteros, whose playing is subsidiary to his captaincy at the moment, went 13 holes before his first bogey and finished under par. All of which makes Ralf Bertoni's 86 one of the poorer efforts of his professional career. This is not a good week for the German. He is sponsored by Audi.

Scores, digest, page 23

Pros' 'insurance' betting banned

Snooker

Professionals were banned last night by the game's governing body from betting against themselves as an insurance wager. After a policy review by the Board of the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association, a rule has been added

to the code of discipline which stops players from betting on matches "they are personally involved in".

The move follows allegations that some players were placing bets on an opponent to make up the prize money shortfall between winning and losing.

"While some members might

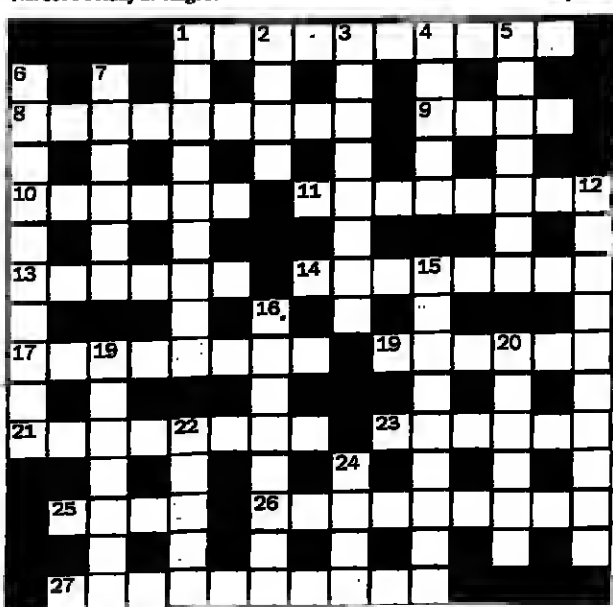
believe it makes financial sense to place a bet on an opponent as insurance against losing it, the Board does not regard this practice to be ethical," the WPBSA chairman Rex Williams said. "Snooker is one of the few sports where players still call a foul on themselves and we pride ourselves on having a reputation for sportsmanship."

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3398 Friday 29 August

By Phil

Thursday's solution



Across
1. Tears up and secures a role (5, 5)
8. Disease giving ailing one pain without hesitation (9)
9. Gloom's known to surround Siberian location (4)
10. Remove stigma from tyrant (6)
11. Preferring to understand? No chance! (6, 2)
13. Artist in US city runs after one (6)
14. City turned open ground into a place for a dip (8)
17. Salesman agreeing and returning cash (8)
19. Everything in America reflected hostility (6)
21. Chatter about one's security on a flight (8)
23. Secretive person often found in bed? (6)

Down
25. Scoundrel caught in grip of hunt protester (4)
26. Sex goddess sporting period hat... (9)
27. ... hat brother fashioned for sex goddess? (5-5)
28. Arrogance from Brit in Oz feeling sorry about half of abos (9)
29. Left one overturned on floor-covering (4)
30. A lad smuggling in close at certain times of the year (8)
31. Little new in TV show? That's the point (5)
32. Dish is swathed in tripe? A lot is left unfinished (7)
33. Curmudgeon after a rest may be seen running along the beach (6-4)
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